



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300557
Inspection date	28 April 2006
Inspector	Tracey Jane Outram

Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Amanda Dale has been a childminder since 1998. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 5 and 9 years old. They live in an established residential area of Sheffield. There are schools and a selection of pre-school facilities for younger children within walking distance of the premises. Public transport links, shops and children's play areas are also easily accessible. The ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for five minded children and presently she has six minded children on roll, four of whom are under 8 years of age. All of the children attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they are taught the importance of good hygiene and personal care. For example, the children wash their hands frequently and join in with the childminder to complete simple tasks, such as washing the fruit before they eat. The childminder effectively reduces the risk of infections and cross contamination in the home by implementing consistent hygiene measures, such as cleaning the toys and the premises regularly.

The range of food and drink that is provided to children is varied and suitable to address any personal dietary requirements. The childminder has a good understanding of nutrition because she has attended training to increase her knowledge of healthy eating. As a result, the children benefit from receiving food that is nourishing. Sugary snacks are provided infrequently and healthy options, such as fruit are offered as an alternative.

Each day children are offered opportunities to go for a walk or visit local parks and playgrounds. This provides children with the opportunity to extend and develop their physical skills as they begin to understand the positive effects of exercise. Outdoors in the rear garden, the childminder provides the children with access to a broad range of equipment that is designed to increase their mobility and coordination. They benefit from having frequent opportunities to enjoy climbing, peddling and balancing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a spacious home that is welcoming, comfortable and suitably furnished. The toys and resources are regularly cleaned and checked to ensure that there are no broken parts that could hurt children. The childminder implements good standards of safety within the home. As a result, the children are able to move around freely and demonstrate growing independence as they choose the equipment they wish to play with. The childminder has developed a good fire escape plan. She ensures that all exits remain free from obstruction and smoke detection units are fully operational, however, she does not have a fire blanket.

On outings the children are carefully monitored by the childminder. She ensures that basic safety precautions are always implemented in order to protect children from danger. For example, public play areas are always thoroughly inspected before children are allowed to use any of the equipment and effective supervision ensures that children remain free from harm.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of the indicators of child abuse. She understands that she has a responsibility to monitor children and record any unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour. The childminder has attended child protection training and is knowledgeable regarding what steps she should take if she suspects that a child is being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enjoy caring and warm relationship with the childminder, they are settled and happy within a familiar and well structured daily routine. The children are motivated and willing to participate in a broad range of developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities, which offer good levels of challenge.

The childminder is patient and keen to ensure that children benefit from taking an active part in everyday activities, such as washing the dishes and using long straws to blow bubbles in the soapy water. They use a variety of resources, for example, art and craft materials, small world equipment, games and puzzles. Play opportunities are meaningful and help the children to make good developmental progress. They are encouraged by the childminder to count, sort and recognise colours and shapes.

The children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend with the childminder, they are confident and very lively. The children's language skills and vocabulary are particularly well developed. Communication is openly encouraged through activities, such as reading stories, role play and singing. The children's contributions are valued and they respond to the praise and encouragement that they receive. Frequent outings and visits to local toddler groups provide children with the opportunities to socialise and make new friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder takes positive steps to build up effective relationships with the parents of the minded children. She is keen to ensure that they remain informed of all issues affecting their children and the childminding service. She successfully achieves this through providing them with written policies and procedures at the start of a placement. Similarly, she spends time with parents to ensure that she is in full receipt of all of the necessary information that relates to the care and individual needs of their children. Parents are made aware of what to do if they need to make a complaint, however, the childminder does not keep a complaints log.

The children's behaviour is very good. The childminder ensures that she supports children and deals with any challenging behaviour sensitively by considering their ages and maturity. The children are encouraged to be kind to each other, as a result, they learn from a young age about taking turns and cooperating. The childminder helps the children to value each other and they form strong friendships. For example, younger children talk about the older children and ask when they are coming home from school to play. Positive images of culture and ethnicity are provided through books and toys, consequently, the children respect each others differences and similarities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The daily routine is efficiently organised to meet children's individual needs. They enjoy a good balance of inside and outside play opportunities along with some local outings. They are happy,

confident and secure. The premises are organised to effectively create an interesting environment for children to play and learn. The childminder has a strong commitment to attending further training and this has a positive affect on the care that she offers to children.

The childminder ensures that parents are encouraged to share information and she provides them with detailed information about her setting. Most of the necessary written consent from parents is in place, which ensures that they are kept informed of issues affecting the service. The required documentation including accidents and attendance is well organised and stored in a manner that supports confidentiality. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has taken positive steps to reduce hazards in her property. She has fitted covers to low level sockets, removed dangerous substances from child height cupboards and increased security in the garden. The childminder has also attended child protection training and obtained a copy of the local procedures. As a result children's safety has been improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

The provider is asked to keep a record of complaints made by the parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide a fire blanket
- maintain a complaints log.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk