



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300526
Inspection date	18 September 2006
Inspector	Susan Kathleen Wormald
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?

The childminder was registered in 1996. She lives in Sheffield with her partner and son within walking distance of local amenities such as shops, parks and schools. The whole of the downstairs floor, upstairs bathroom and one bedroom are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden suitable for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for 13 children on a part-time basis during the day and before and after school, nine of whom are under eight. She is registered to care for one child overnight. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a co-ordinator for the south west childminding co-operative.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment where good standards of hygiene are maintained. Their individual needs regarding health are met effectively because the childminder makes sure she is well informed and complies with any specific requirements for their care. Children receive support and guidance from the childminder about good hygiene practice and are moving towards independence in attending to their personal care. They learn through daily routines and are reminded, for example, by signs displayed in the toilet. There are good arrangements in place to protect children from infection and parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be cared for.

Children enjoy a broad range of stimulating opportunities that promote their enjoyment of physical activity and the outdoor environment. This contributes to keeping them fit and well and ensures they make good progress in their physical development. Young children have everyday opportunities to develop confidence and control of their bodies and to practise and develop physical skills. They have fun manoeuvring cars and tractors in the garden and regularly visit soft play centres and playgrounds where they have opportunities to use large equipment such as climbing frames and slides.

Children's understanding and awareness of healthy eating is promoted through discussion, activities and being offered a choice of healthy snacks and nutritious meals. They enjoy the childminder's home grown tomatoes for their lunch and go shopping with the childminder choosing a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. They all sit down together at mealtimes, which are pleasant social occasions where children understand expectations about how they should behave.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure, comfortable and welcoming surroundings. The childminder completes risk assessments and takes appropriate safety measures enabling children to move around freely and independently while being protected from harm. They wear distinctive orange wristbands when on outings which give the childminder's contact details and enables her to identify them clearly. Children learn to keep themselves safe as the childminder helps them to understand danger and to develop safe practice. For example, they learn how to keep safe when crossing roads and practice evacuating the house in an emergency.

Children enjoy the use of a broad range of good quality resources and equipment. These are readily accessible and support a wide variety of experiences and enable children to make choices about their play.

Children's welfare is safeguarded effectively because the childminder has a secure understanding of how to protect children and recognises that this is her first priority. She has attended recent

training to update her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and is clear and confident about procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They are comfortable and at ease in the setting as the childminder recognises that they benefit from a predictable, calm environment with regular routines and familiar resources. Children share a warm and friendly relationship with the childminder which contributes to their sense of security and belonging. They communicate with each other well and enjoy each others company. They have fun together singing songs and rhymes taking turns sitting on her knee, giggling and laughing with anticipation. Young children become absorbed in a role play activity, sitting on the floor with the childminder and having a pretend tea party. She supports and extends their language development effectively encouraging conversation. Children develop confidence as the childminder talks to them, shows interest in what they are doing and involves herself in their play. Her attention, support and encouragement promotes their self-esteem.

Children are offered a variety of interesting and enjoyable activities and play experiences which support and challenge their development. The childminder's good understanding of how children progress and how best to support this, promotes their learning. They are encouraged to think for themselves and to solve simple problems as the childminder uses opportunities during play to introduce concepts such as shape, size and number. Children benefit from a wide range of experiences outside the setting, including regular opportunities to socialise with other children. They visit local parks, have trips to adventure playgrounds and have regular interesting outings to a butterfly farm and water park.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well as the childminder takes time to get to know the children, is sensitive to their needs and works in close partnership with parents. She finds out what is important to them and uses this information to increase their confidence and sense of well-being. Children are made to feel special and have a sense of belonging as they celebrate birthdays together, recognise themselves in photographs and see their work displayed. Children learn to feel good about themselves as they are given praise and attention and are clearly valued. Their awareness of diversity is promoted through a wide range of interesting resources such as books written in different languages and dressing up clothes that reflect cultural differences.

Children's behaviour is good and they are polite and helpful. They respond well to the childminder's clear and consistent boundaries and her calm and positive approach. Through discussion and explanation, the childminder's good example, games and activities, they are learning to be considerate, to respect one another and to share and take turns.

The childminder works in close association with parents and keeps them well informed about their children and their progress. For example, she keeps a development journal on individual children. This contributes to children's well being and helps ensure they are settled and secure. She talks to parents about her childcare practice and has some very helpful written information available. Parents have very positive views about the quality of care for their children and support for themselves. They write about their implicit trust in her care, the fun and fulfilling time their children have and how welcome they are made to feel.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are secure and well cared for because the childminder organises her time effectively to promote their play and care. This ensures she has time to meet children's demands and is able to give them some individual attention. Children are offered a range of suitable and interesting activities both inside and outdoors where they can relax and play and which help them progress and develop. The childminder makes good use of local facilities such as toddler groups and plans regular trips and outings, which are varied and interesting.

All required records and documents which contribute to children's health, safety and welfare are in place, are maintained clearly and accurately and are easily accessible. The childminder demonstrates a positive commitment towards her own personal development. She has attended a variety of relevant training and completed a comprehensive written evaluation of her practice. The childminder shares information daily with parents about children's activities and care needs, ensuring consistency and continuity of care. A number of written policies support the childminder's practice. However, procedures regarding complaints have not been updated to reflect current guidance and safety procedures regarding overnight stays require some additional detail. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to consider keeping a record of childminding events and to devise a policy for overnight stays. The childminder maintains an ongoing record of childminding activities through photographs and children's work and has a suitable written policy covering overnight care. This ensures that children are appropriately cared for overnight and a record of their activities is available for parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by 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):

- review and update the procedures dealing with complaints to ensure that they reflect current requirements and ensure that plans regarding emergency evacuation include overnight care.

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