



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	300533
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Sarah Gilpin

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?

This childminder registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 10 and 14 years in Sheffield. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, bathroom facilities are on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently caring for seven children who attend on a part time basis. She takes and collects children to and from local schools and makes use of local facilities such as the park and library.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is a committee member of the local childminder's group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in an environment that is clean and maintained to a good standard. The childminder understands and promotes good hygiene through daily routines, such as ensuring they understand why they need to wash their hands before and after meals. As a result, the children's awareness of their personal hygiene is developing. Suitable equipment for dealing with accidents involving children, such as a well-stocked first aid box and an accident record book are in place. Records are detailed and contain all of the required information. There is a system for obtaining consent from the parents in order for the childminder to seek emergency treatment for the children in her care. However, not all parents have provided consent.

The children enjoy nutritious and healthy snacks that are provided by the childminder. She has a good knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet and provides fresh fruit for the children each day. The childminder works in partnership with parents to ensure that children are not exposed to any foods that may cause an allergic reaction, and detailed information relating to special dietary requirements is recorded. Parents provide a packed lunch for their children and these are stored in the fridge to keep them safe for children to eat.

The children benefit from fresh air and exercise on a regular basis. For example, they walk to and from the nursery and school each day and take advantage of the secure garden environment during the fine weather. The childminder understands that young children's physical development is important and she successfully encourages them to eat independently and climb the stairs to use the bathroom facilities. Children's rest and sleep routines are understood by the childminder, who meets these needs by providing sleep facilities, which are comfortable and suit their individual likes and dislikes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment because the childminder takes appropriate steps to minimise hazards. For example, outer doors are kept locked when children are present and close supervision of the children means that potential risks are avoided when they play in the garden. Children's access to the kitchen is supervised and they are closely monitored when they go upstairs to use the bathroom. Fire safety precautions, such as a fire blanket and smoke detectors are in place, and the childminder has given some thought to how she and the children will escape in an emergency. However, she does not routinely practice the fire evacuation with the children to raise their awareness of their own safety. The childminder enjoys taking the children on an annual outing to the seaside and demonstrates a very good understanding of how to risk assess for hazards and minimise potential dangers. This includes taking equipment, such as a travel first aid kit to ensure she can deal with emergency situations.

There is a good range of toys and resources, which children can access safely because they are stored at low-level in suitable boxes. There is a child sized table and chairs, which they can safely use for activities, such as drawing. The indoor equipment available meets the required safety standards and the childminder maintains and cleans the toys and resources on a regular basis.

The childminder has a good understanding of her role in dealing with child protection, which means that children are safeguarded. She demonstrates a clear awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. She understands how to observe, record and report any concerns relating to the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are really comfortable and well settled in their surroundings because they enjoy warm and affectionate relationships with the childminder. Cuddles and reassurance are a regular feature, which helps the children to feel confident around unfamiliar adults. The childminder enjoys playing with the children, she gets down to their level and is actively involved in their play. She talks constantly to the children, helping them to learn. For example, they talk about the colours of the play dough. The childminder uses her experience and her developing knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan appropriate activities to suit the age and developmental stage of the children in her care. For example, early writing is practised with the older children and laminated colour cards are used for matching activities.

The childminder ensures that children have choices about what they do by providing a varied range of equipment and resources that are rotated on a regular basis to help maintain their interest. They can choose for themselves because resources are stored at low-level in boxes, which promotes their independence. Children are helped to enjoy books because there is a wide variety of story books for them to choose from. Craft activities and baking are planned to ensure that children have chance to express themselves creatively. For example, they have recently painted pasta and then followed this up by threading the pasta to make brightly coloured necklaces.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy being with a childminder who works hard to get to know them and their families. She ensures that children are developing their awareness of other people and the world around them, by providing them with books and resources that show positive images of the diversity of society. Their understanding of the local community and environment is growing because the childminder takes them out in the local area to socialise with other children. For example, they go to toddler group, the park and the soft play area.

Children's behaviour is effectively managed by the childminder who uses positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour and they respond to her warm and positive approach. The childminder successfully uses techniques, such as distraction, to refocus the children to a

different task or activity. As a result, the children are developing an understanding of what is right and wrong.

There are good working relationships with the parents and the childminder understands the benefits of working in partnership. Information is shared through daily diaries for the younger children and verbal exchanges as the children arrive and depart. These methods of communication benefit the children, help to maintain their continuity of care, and ensures that they are cared for according to their parents' wishes. The childminder has a good understanding of the regulations regarding the recording of complaints.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are cared for in a well organised environment where resources are stored at their level, to enable them to access them easily. The childminder provides children with fun and varied activities because she plans her routine for the week. The children enjoy home-based play and outings to the local park and playgroup where they have chance to socialise with their peers. This helps the children to feel secure, happy and well settled.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and has a developing knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She has most of the required documentation to support the care of the children. For example, written agreements are in place and their attendance is accurately recorded. In addition, the childminder has implemented a complaints record and has simple policies and procedures, which she implements well to promote positive outcomes for the children. The childminder has sought consent for emergency treatment for most of the children in her care, although, she does not hold this for all of the children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve the following; to ensure that there is written consent for seeking emergency treatment and to keep a record of events. The childminder has consent for most children in her care and this has been raised as a further recommendation. There is a daily diary that is used to record the events and outings.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- make sure that there is written consent to seek emergency treatment for all of the children cared for
- consider how to raise children's awareness of their own safety through practising the emergency evacuation with them.

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