

Childminder Inspection Analysis October 2012

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Appendix 5

National comparison	2010/11 FY	2011/12 FY	Aug-11	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Number inadequate ³	Number inspected	RAG	DOT ⁴	Last inspection date
71%	61%	65%	65%	64%	64%	64%	1	849	LG	▶	31/08/2012

Context and background

The childminding sector in Leeds is one of the largest in the country with 966 registered childminders at the time of writing. In the last 12 months there have been over 100 newly registered childminders alone.

The 4 per cent improvement in good or better judgments between 2010/11 and 2011/12 was a significant improvement for the authority. Between October 19th 2011 and October 19th 2012 there have been 160 childminding inspections with the following outcomes

- § Outstanding 3.75%
- § Good 38.75% (= % good or better 42.5%)
- § Satisfactory 35.63%
- § Inadequate 1.25%

As of August 2012 64% childminders were judged good or outstanding, 7% below the national comparison. However, when compared with our statistical neighbours Leeds' figure is in line or above 4 of our statistical neighbours despite having twice as many inspections as our closest statistical neighbour, Sheffield, with 402 inspections compared to Leeds' 849 within the same period.

% childminders judged good or outstanding 2011/12 (FY to date)			
Leeds (@ Aug 12)	64%	849	
2010/11 FY	61%		
2011/12 FY	65%		
Statistical Neighbours			Leeds above, below or inline?
Sheffield	67	402	3% below
Bolton	68	173	4% below
Stockton on Tees	62	165	2% above
Darlington	51	99	13% above
Calderdale	58	162	6% above
St Helens	69	84	5% below
Derby	64	159	in line
Kirklees	66	345	2% below
North Tyneside	85	148	21% below
Milton Keynes	68	290	4% below
<i>2. Data are based on inspections carried out since the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage in September 2008.</i>			

A further consideration is the number of childminding inspections taking place where there are no children on roll. In these instances a childminder will be inspected under the same framework, but rather than given an outstanding/good/satisfactory/inadequate judgement a met or not met judgement will be given. These figures are not taken into account in the Children's services inspection dashboard but can affect a significant number of childminders. For example, between October 19th 2011 and October 19th 2012 this

accounted for 20.8% of inspections where there were no children on roll (18.3% were met and 2.5% not met).

Key trends from inspections

Officers have duty to be aware of key inspection trends and use these in their support, challenge and training. They have noted the following key actions and recommendations, listed in order of frequency published and with the team's response:

Documentation – Including policy and procedures, specific references to obtaining parental permissions. **Response** This has been addressed by producing an essential paperwork pack, including sample policies and procedures. This is distributed via individual visits and local networks.

Observation, assessment and planning - Starting points, next steps, and parental input into observations. **Response** Addressed by training written and delivered on Observation, assessment and planning for home based child carers. Clearer and consistent messages on Ofsted and local authority expectations.

Risk assessment – detailing risk assessments for outings, reviews and signatures. **Response** Sample documentation developed and used by childminders.

Self Evaluation and Diversity (extending children's experience around equality of opportunity) were also highlighted as key recommendations in a smaller number of inspections.

Local authority support

Historically, local authority support to the childminding sector has been provided by the Childcare Consultant Team whose main focus was supporting childminder training after Ofsted registration and ensuring providers met the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements welfare requirements. Additional support from the National Childminding Association was commissioned by Children's Services but has reduced in the last year replacing support with an information and advice roll. In line with many other Children's Services teams the childcare consultant team has become integrated with other teams to provide a targeted service. They are now part of a 0-11 teaching and learning team and integrated with Early Years Consultants to create a 0-5 improvement team with a stronger focus on teaching, learning and quality improvement.

There are 8 full time equivalent childcare consultants equating to 102 childminders per officer, including 44 satisfactory childminders per officer. This provides challenges for the team as to how they make best use of their time to engage and support the sector with quality improvement issues. However, a revised early years improvement programme, pooling of skills and better locality working are slowly impacting positively upon the engagement and improved outcomes of the childminding sector, particularly targeted satisfactory childminders.

Other issues impacting on inspection outcomes

- § A childminder inspected with no children on roll only allows a judgement of 'met'. If the previous inspection outcome was good, this may have reduced accumulative percentage of good outcomes.
- § A number of childminders are remaining at satisfactory despite engagement attempts from the team. These childminders are 'coasting' on satisfactory outcomes as it still allows them child mind thus generating an income. Until September 2012 Ofsted (the regulator) saw satisfactory as 'okay'. This mindset has changed and from September 2012 the expectation is that childminders should be aiming for good or better.
- § Satisfactory childminders do not usually have access to the internet or are not confident in using IT, and do not access training if its not community based. This can leave a gap in them receiving or keeping up to date with information. Increased used of local Children's Centres as hubs for information and support and more locality based training and networks are used to counteract this.
- § The process of Ofsted registration means that at the point of registration childminders have to reach a very basic level of expertise in order to establish themselves as a childminder. In Leeds we have

a small number of childminders working in homes who Ofsted deem suitable at the point of registration but often require intensive support from the local authority to maintain (or improve) on a satisfactory grade.

Conclusion

Raising the profile of the childminding sector in Leeds has been a key priority for the team over the last 12 months. The introduction of regular childminder study days, a Leeds Quality Childminding Network, access to professional learning and quality improvement programmes such as Every Child a Talker have all supported improved quality childminding practice and status. Prioritising and allocating officer support (with a focus on learning, teaching and welfare) to satisfactory childminders is every officer's business and this is monitored through new, measurable PALS (performance management) targets for the team. Our aim is to build upon the 4 per cent increase already seen over the last 12 months and raise the percentage of good or better childminders in Leeds by another 3 per cent.