

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319638
Inspection date	19 February 2008
Inspector	Linda Filewood
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 1983 and works in conjunction with another childminder and an assistant from her home in Oulton, near Leeds. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time when working on her own and 12 children when working with another childminder or assistant. She is currently minding 10 children on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local toddler groups and playgroup. The family has a dog.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted and they are cared for in a clean home, where positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder encourages children to learn about good personal hygiene routines, such as brushing their teeth after breakfast, and they use paper towels when drying their hands, to prevent the spread of infection. Hygienic procedures are in place for nappy changing. Children receive good care if they become unwell. A short written sickness policy explains to parents why they should not bring sick children to prevent the spread of the illness to others. The childminder has a current first aid qualification and good systems are in place for recording accidents and any medication administered. However, although the childminder individually records all non-prescription medication and discusses its use with parents prior to administering it, she does not fully consider the children's safety when giving, for example, cough preparation.

The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating and ensures that children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. She is flexible in her approach and is happy to either provide food for the children herself, especially breakfast, or for parents to cater for their own children. Snacks include plenty of fresh fruit and drinks are available at all times. Children enjoy taking part in simple cooking activities, such as making buns or jelly, which they enjoy eating with their tea.

Children have regular opportunities for physical exercise and fresh air. They enjoy playing in the garden in the large wooden play house or using wheeled vehicles and practising ball skills. Visits to local parks, especially further afield during the school holidays, provide opportunities for children to run around, practise balancing and climbing skills on large play equipment and have picnics. They enjoy walking to the canal to feed the ducks, taking the dog for a walk and younger children visit local soft play centres where they can develop their climbing skills safely. Young children rest and sleep in accordance with their own sleep patterns and their parents' wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder regularly risk assesses the rooms used for minding and ensures that all age-appropriate safety precautions are in place, so that children play safely. For instance, a safety gate prevents young children accessing the kitchen area, especially when the childminder is preparing a meal. Fire evacuation procedures, a fire blanket and smoke detectors are in place in the home to protect the children in the event of an evacuation. The fire drill is practised regularly, especially when new children start attending, and is well logged. Children are safe on outings as the childminder uses reins for young children who walk and others are asked to hold hands. Good ratios are maintained on longer outings as the childminder's assistant and co-minder often are present.

Children benefit from all the available space as they move freely from one area to another, confidently accessing resources, which are within easy reach. Good supervision is given to the children when sleeping. Resources are clean and well maintained and large craft activities are sometimes left out overnight so that children can complete them another day. The childminder carefully monitors the use of resources to make sure that young children cannot reach those

that are inappropriate for their age and stage of development. Young children use a low table and small chairs so that they can enjoy their food and activities, such as jigsaws, in comfort.

Children play in a generally secure environment, although, the front door is left unlocked whilst parents are collecting children, allowing them to enter the premises without alerting the childminder. The childminder is fully aware of her responsibility to safeguard the children's welfare and has attended further training to update her knowledge. She demonstrates a sound understanding of child protection issues and explains her duty for the safety and welfare of the children to parents through clearly written child protection policies. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that only authorised adults collect the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and comfortable in their environment and older children quickly settle to activities on their return from school. All children play happily together whilst younger children are equally content and secure to play on their own, especially during imaginative games. Children enjoy warm relationships with the childminder and her co-workers. Young children enjoy a cosy story time with the childminder after lunch and older children chat confidently about their day at school. Children participate well in a good variety of creative activities and their pictures are well displayed showing that the childminder values their work. She offers good encouragement and praise, raising their levels of self-esteem and confidence. Young children relate particularly well to songs, often spontaneously singing rhymes during play, and the childminder skilfully uses their interest in singing to teach them numbers.

A good range of activities and resources, which contribute well to the children's development, are offered to the children. The childminder knows the children's abilities well, demonstrates a good understanding of how children learn and offers challenge to children who are particularly able in certain areas. The skilful use of games, that are suitable for all age ranges, improves the children's concentration skills, teaches them to play by the rules and helps young children match the items they see. Young children enjoy imaginative play; they dress up and cooperate well with each other. Children are becoming confident speakers. Older children talk happily about the toys they like to play with and younger children's communication skills are developing well as the childminder talks to them, asking questions and discussing, for instance, the colours or characters in a story. Children benefit from a good range of outings which are enjoyed by all and daily visits to various local groups help the younger children learn to socialise with other children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well by the childminder and she demonstrates a good understanding of considering them when offering support to the children. She discusses and records specific requirements with parents to ensure consistent care. The childminder has a relevant written policy to promote equal opportunities and inclusion which she shares with parents. Children are developing a good awareness of diversity through access to a wide range of resources, including books, dolls and dressing-up clothes. They are well supported in gaining positive attitudes towards others and becoming aware of differences. For example, they enjoy learning about how a blind person is helped by her special dog during a visit to the setting.

Children are well behaved, play cooperatively together and respond well to the childminder. The childminder has a consistent approach when managing behaviour and is fully aware of using differing methods in a positive way, with children who have different levels of understanding. Children develop respect for each other and their environment as the childminder gives clear explanations on how to handle resources, such as books and encourages good manners.

The childminder promotes a positive working relationship with parents and long standing relationships have developed with some families. She provides a well presented information file, which includes the childminding policies and procedures for each parent. Regular discussions take place and important message are passed on from school and playgroup so that parents are fully informed about their child's day. A collection of photographs with written comments in scrapbooks show parents the full range of activities, based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework that children are involved in. There are good introductory arrangements in place to help new children settle quickly and feel secure. Parents provide positive comments on the care given and they are happy with the service the childminder offers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has many years of childminding experience and provides long term, stable childminding placements for families. She is keen to work in partnership with parents and accommodates the flexible working patterns of some parents. Children are confident, happy and secure in her care. Safety inside and outside the childminder's home is generally well maintained and children's individual needs are effectively met. The childminder recognises that children need variety in their day; time to rest and be quiet in a secure environment. The childminder works well with her assistant and co-minder to offer children good support at all times. She makes good use of other groups, such as the local childminding group, to offer children plenty of play opportunities and outings with larger groups of children and adults.

The childminder shows good commitment to ongoing professional development and attends a good variety of training that enhance the care she offers the children. Children benefit from the childminder's well organised and safely managed childminding service. All the required documentation is appropriately maintained, up to date and stored securely. Confidentiality is respected and children's files are individually maintained. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the childminder was asked to inform the local authority planning department of numbers of children being cared for on the premises and abide by their recommendations. She has written to them with details of her childminding service but has not yet received a reply from them.

The childminder was also asked to improve the procedures for the administration of non-prescription medication to children and to provide information for parents about her responsibilities regarding child protection. The childminder obtains permission from parents before administering any non-prescription medication but does not always fully consider children's safety when administering a cough preparation at the parent's request. This remains a recommendation following this inspection. Parents receive a clearly written child protection policy which fully explains the childminder's duty to safeguard their children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- improve the procedures for the administration of non-prescription medication to children
- improve the security of the premises when childminding is taking place, particularly when parents are collecting children at the end of the day.

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