

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319945
Inspection date	10 August 2007
Inspector	Liz Whitehead
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 1994. She lives with her husband and two children aged 18 and 12 years in Tingley, near Leeds and Wakefield. The ground floor, with a dedicated playroom, is used for childminding purposes and there is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently has eight children on roll.

The childminder is currently completing a level 3 qualification in childcare and is working towards the Leeds Quality Assurance Scheme. She runs the local childminding group, is a member of the National Childminding Association and is on the committee of the local childminding association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder is very proactive in reducing the risk of cross-infection to children. She consistently follows the written illness and emergency procedure, which all parents are made

fully aware of when they register their child with the childminder. If a child becomes ill whilst in her care the childminder makes the child comfortable and contacts the parents. Children with an infectious illness are expected to stay at home to prevent it from spreading to other children and adults.

Children's personal hygiene is promoted extremely well. They are very aware of good personal hygiene routines and happily clean their hands before snack and after using the toilet. Older children have devised hand washing routines which are prominently displayed in the bathroom. The younger children enjoy following these and know that they must wash their hands to get rid of germs and 'nasties'. Robust hygiene procedures are in place when changing children's nappies. The childminder ensures that she consistently uses a mat, wears disposable gloves, disposes of the nappy immediately and thoroughly washes her hands. She makes this a relaxing and fun activity for very young children, continually talking to them and describing what she is doing.

Mealtimes are a social occasion with everyone sitting together at the table. The childminder ensures that all children are fully included. Young children sitting in highchairs are positioned close to the table to enable them to socialise and talk with their peers. Children develop an awareness and understanding about eating a balanced diet through the provision of healthy meals and snacks. They know about healthy options and spontaneously choose a banana to eat. To ensure that she is fully informed and able to provide an appropriate diet for the children, the childminder has attended a children's food and nutrition course and has a healthy eating policy. All meals are homemade and the childminder does not use any processed foods.

Children have many opportunities to experience exercise both indoors and in the fresh air. They regularly visit the park, walk to school and play in the garden. They are able to use their full range of muscles during large physical play, when riding bicycles, using the slide and dancing to music. The childminder talks to children about the effects of exercise on their body and, when young children pull themselves up to walk, she talks about their legs getting stronger ready to walk. Children are regularly offered drinks and they are always available with meals, but they cannot access drinks independently. Children sleep according to their own routines, needs and parents' wishes. The childminder knows the children well and follows young children's signs as to when they are tired. Individual bedding reduces the risk of cross-infection and the childminder regularly checks on sleeping children to keep them safe.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder fully raises children's awareness of safety both inside and outside the home. They happily help to tidy the toys away so they do not fall on them and they discuss and agree which toys are suitable when young children are present. The childminder is very proactive in raising children's awareness of road safety and they regularly discuss this when they are out and about. Indoors, posters are displayed regarding road and car safety and, whilst looking at a book, the childminder and children talk about the importance of always wearing a seatbelt. Children's safety is significantly enhanced through a safety on outings and a lost child policy.

A first aid kit is readily available in the playroom, one in the car and one is also taken on outings to ensure that any minor accidents can be dealt with promptly and appropriately. All the toys and equipment are extremely clean, well maintained, conform to safety standards and are suitable for their purpose. Risk assessments are regularly carried out and reviewed and all risks to children have been reduced. For example, a notice on the exterior door acts as a useful

reminder that the door must be locked at all times. Information regarding the changes to legislation for the use of car seats is prominently displayed for all parents.

Children are very familiar with the emergency evacuation procedure through regular practices. They describe how to leave the home quickly and safely and where to go if they hear the alarm. The childminder is fully aware of fire safety issues through accessing training and the fire plan is prominently displayed to ensure that all parents and visitors are fully aware of it. Smoke alarms are appropriately sited on each level of the home and an additional one is fitted in the playroom. Additionally, a fire blanket is readily available in the kitchen and a fire extinguisher in the playroom in case of emergency.

Children are fully protected as the childminder has a sound working knowledge of child protection and has a written policy in place. To ensure that she has the appropriate knowledge and skills to manage any issues, the childminder has attended training and has literature to refer to. She is fully aware of the importance of recording existing injuries, and makes parents aware of her responsibility to report any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder. They are enthusiastic, motivated to learn and excitedly talk about the activities that they enjoy. These include playing outdoors, trips out and creative activities, such as painting and sticking. The childminder fully understands that children learn best when they are interested and having fun and has devised a care, learning and play policy. She skilfully uses routine activities, such as describing where the bubbles go to when they pull the plug out of the sink, to extend children's knowledge and understanding. A large number of outings are carefully planned to maximise children's learning and development. These include visits to various parks and farms, and the children really enjoy visiting the library and the garden centre.

The childminder prepares and plans a very broad range of stimulating activities which challenge the children and cover the areas of learning. She completes and prominently displays written records which cover long-, medium- and short-term planning. These remain fully flexible to enable children to be involved in the decision-making process and activities to be spontaneous and child-led. Children thoroughly enjoy reading books with the childminder. They cuddle up to her and sit on her knee, and share her enthusiasm for the stories. The children are skilful communicators and enjoy discussing the pictures and stories with the childminder. She intuitively develops children's vocabulary by regularly introducing new words to children. For example, they describe the bubbles as 'frothy' and when they melt as 'watery'.

The childminder has great enthusiasm and very effectively uses 'Birth to three matters' in her daily practice to encourage young children to reach their full learning potential whilst having fun. The children greatly benefit from excellent interaction with the childminder. They share a warm, trusting and affectionate relationship and children feel happy, secure and confident within the childminder's care. Young children are highly motivated to learn and are supported by the childminder to reach their full potential. They concentrate well and thoroughly enjoy listening to the sounds and tones that they make as they bang the blocks together. They begin to join them together with help from the childminder, who really praises them and is rewarded with smiles and chuckles of pleasure. Despite the children's young age, they talk about the colours and count the pieces. This creates an environment which is highly conducive to children's learning.

Children regularly visit the library to supplement the extensive range of factual and fictional books that the childminder has. These include craft books for ideas of things to make, books that deal with difficult subjects, such as bullying, books that teach children mathematical concepts and many storybooks for children of all ages. This encourages children to really value books as a source of information as well as pleasure. Young children are fascinated by the bright pictures and different textures in a book that they look at with the childminder.

Children have many opportunities to act out a wide range of familiar scenarios, for example, going to the hairdresser's. The childminder happily has her hair done by the children and they talk about what happens when they visit the hairdressers. The childminder asks the children questions to challenge them and make them think, such as, 'What does the hair dresser use to clean your hair?' Children's memory recollection is aided through discussing past events. For example, the children talk with the childminder about their birthday and the cake that they enjoyed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children behave exceptionally well and happily help to tidy the toys away when they have finished playing with them. They follow the childminder's positive example and are polite and courteous, and spontaneously say 'please' and 'thank you'. The childminder uses positive encouragement and consistently gives children meaningful praise. She sets clear, consistent and realistic boundaries and uses methods of distraction and encouragement to help children learn right from wrong. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and a list of house rules that they have devised are prominently displayed in the playroom. The childminder consistently follows the behaviour policy and works very closely with the parents to ensure that a consistent approach is achieved to manage children's behaviour.

The childminder welcomes children with learning difficulties or disabilities and has made many preparations to care for them. She has attended a number of related courses to ensure that all children are able to fully participate in the activities. These include a course regarding the use of empathy dolls, which she has fully implemented into her setting. The doll is fully included into the daily routine and is taken on outings. They talk about the doll being strapped into the car seat to keep him safe. The children have fully embraced the doll and thoroughly enjoy including him in the activities.

Children have a very good understanding and awareness of the diversity of their local community and the wider world. They have daily access to a very wide range of resources that portray positive images. They thoroughly enjoy playing with a selection of figures which positively portray people with disabilities and the childminder answers children's questions openly and honestly. They regularly celebrate a range of festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Christmas. The childminder encourages children to think about those that are less fortunate than themselves and they regularly participate in fundraising activities.

Children have a real sense of belonging and they are fully included in all aspects of the setting. The childminder encourages children to gradually become independent through providing equipment, such as a step stool in the bathroom to enable children to use the toilet unaided. They also cut their own fruit up at snack time. All children have an individual peg which is depicted with a photograph of themselves. They know that this is where their coat and personal items will always be. The childminder encourages children to take pride in their achievements and thoughtfully displays their art work. The children's emotional and physical needs are very

effectively met as the childminder spends time drawing with the children individually and looking at books together. She cuddles and comforts all ages of children when they are tired or need reassurance.

The childminder is continually reviewing and assessing the service that she provides. She actively encourages parental feedback by regularly providing questionnaires. She then uses the responses to inform her future plans to enable her to offer the children and their families the best care possible. The childminder has really positive letters from parents of children that she has cared for and comments include that she 'provides an invaluable service'. Extremely effective systems are in place to ensure that parents are kept fully informed regarding their child's care, development and well-being at all times. These include noticeboards, diaries, individual children's files, which parents and children are encouraged to contribute to, and daily discussions.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is extremely dedicated and has a sound working knowledge of the National Standards and the supporting criteria. She successfully implements this into her everyday working practice to provide a positive experience for the children she cares for. She is exceptionally committed to developing her knowledge and skills through attending a large number of relevant courses, in addition to those required. She runs the local childminding group and encourages other childminders to develop good practice and arranges training on a number of courses including 'Birth to three matters'. She is proactive in keeping up to date with changes in childcare and is enrolled on a course regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The home is very warm and welcoming to children and their families, with a number of relevant documents prominently and attractively displayed. Toys are readily available in the dedicated playroom. These are exceptionally well organised into labelled storage boxes and are arranged on low shelves and cupboards to enable children to freely access them. Photographs and pictures on the walls create a stimulating and child-orientated environment where space is very well organised for the children's benefit. Furniture is arranged to maximise floor space for the children to relax and spread their toys out on.

Very effective systems are in place and are consistently implemented to protect the children in her care. These include relevant checks being completed on all appropriate adults, the childminder carefully inspecting visitors' identification prior to them entering the home, and children not being left unsupervised with persons who have not been vetted.

All required documentation is in place; however, medication records are not always countersigned by parents. Records are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are accurate and up to date at all times. The childminder is proactive in ensuring that children's details are always correct and takes positive steps to remind parents to notify her of any changes. Confidentiality is effectively maintained through sensitive information being only available to the childminder. She has detailed files of information which are shown to all parents, informing them of the service that she provides. These include course certificates, details regarding activities, meals and policies and procedures which are unique to the setting. 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 agreed to continue to access relevant training and to improve children's information sheets. Both these recommendations have been fully addressed and the childminder has accessed a number of courses to continue her personal development to enhance the existing good practice. Additionally, children's information sheets now contain all relevant information. These improvements enhance children's care and well-being.

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):

- implement systems to enable children to independently access drinks
- ensure that medication records are countersigned by parents.

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