

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321936
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Angela Margaret Ellis

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 has been registered since 1999 and lives with her husband and two sons. They live in a bungalow on the outskirts of Ossett, which is near to the city of Wakefield. The lounge and dining room are used for childminding purposes. There is a large garden suitable for outdoor play. There are shops, parks, open spaces, local council amenities, schools and childcare groups nearby.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years and currently has seven children on roll who she cares for on various day and times.

The family has a pet dog.

She 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 promoted because the childminder follows effective health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. She has most of the required records in place to gather information from parents regarding medical needs, dietary requirements and allergies. However, written consent from parents for the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place. Children learn about their personal hygiene well through their daily routines, because the childminder regularly reinforces good hygiene practices. For example, children wash their hands before and after meals.

Children enjoy good health because the childminder provides a varied balance of nutritious meals, snacks and drinks. At the time of the inspection, the childminder provided vegetables to accompany the fish fingers they were eating for lunch, followed by a yoghurt. All the children eat together at the table which promotes a relaxed social time in which the childminder emphasises why it is important for them to eat vegetables. She uses cartoon characters to reinforce the message, for example, when saying 'Spiderman eats all of his vegetables, that's why he is strong'.

Children make good progress in their physical development because the childminder provides a good range of physical activities indoors, outdoors and on outings. They have access to a variety of large and small equipment in the garden, play gyms and at parks. This helps them gain confidence and enjoy moving their bodies in various ways. Children play, rest and sleep according to their individual needs because the childminder acts in the best interests of the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and welcoming environment both indoors and out. Risk assessments are undertaken, and where risks are identified these are minimised. However, cleaning materials are accessible in a low kitchen cupboard, therefore posing a potential hazard. The children have a balance between freedom and safe limits. The childminder understands well that suitable types of activities and appropriate levels of support give the children confidence to take risks and try out new skills. Good procedures are in place to keep children safe when they are on outings.

Children safely and independently select activities from a varied range of good quality toys and activities. These are highly appropriate to children's age and stage of development and all meet safety standards. Children show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. For example, they know to blow on their hot food so as not to burn themselves. Children are learning about emergency evacuation procedures because the childminder talks about what they will do if there is a fire, and she practises fire drills with them. When the smoke alarm is set off by the childminder, she asks the children what they do when they hear that sound. They respond 'We go outside and stand by the bikes'.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate, and has all of the required procedures and documents to ensure she acts in the best interests of the children. She has a good understanding of child protection procedures and has received up to date information.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, confident and content in a stimulating and caring environment. Effective and established routines meet the needs of children, for example, for meals, activities and outings. The independence of the children is promoted well because children have free access to a varied range of good quality equipment and make their own choices with enthusiasm and confidence. The childminder knows the children's likes and dislikes well, and therefore provides activities that she knows will interest and challenge them. For example, the children play imaginatively with the trains and create imaginative drawings while playing indoors.

Children are supported by the childminder well when necessary, demonstrating that she understands when and when not to intervene. A caring and affectionate relationship is promoted through good interaction between the children and the childminder.

Parents are kept informed about their child's activities through verbal discussion, art work and photographs. This is all very informative and demonstrates that the childminder values these and this has a positive impact on children's self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs are effectively met because the childminder treats children with equal concern, valuing and respecting their individuality. She ensures all children can take part in activities appropriate to their age, needs and abilities, and is successful in promoting an inclusive provision for all. Children make choices and decisions that contribute to their own learning because the childminder successfully respects their independence.

Children become aware of the local community and learn to develop an awareness of the seasons and wildlife through outings. Birds and other wildlife can be clearly observed in the childminder's garden. Children are beginning to learn about the wider society because there is a good range of resources available depicting positive images of others.

Children behave well in response to the childminder's positive and consistent approach to managing behaviour. Clear and realistic boundaries are established which effectively promote children's understanding of right and wrong. They are beginning to learn to show care and respect for each other and other things and an emphasis is placed on sharing and taking turns.

Successful partnerships with parents contribute well to the children's well-being and provides continuity of care. The childminder provides a wide range of information about her service. This two-way sharing of information and expertise allows the childminder to continually meet the children's ever-changing needs and keeps both parties well informed. Children clearly benefit from this effective partnership and settle well in response, which enhances their experience and makes it a positive one. This is evident in the thank you cards and letters received from parents. There is a complaints policy to share with parents and it has been updated in line with the requirements.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the setting promotes positive outcomes for children because the childminder is very experienced, and continues to be very enthusiastic and motivated in her work with children. She has a very good commitment to training and continued professional development by keeping up to date with current childcare issues. Skills, knowledge and experiences gained through training courses contribute effectively to enhancing the service further. This commitment supports children's care, learning and play effectively.

Children benefit from a balance of home-based play and outings because the childminder encourages the children to broaden their interests and experiences, this is evident in the stimulating environment provided for the children and her interaction with them. Resources and activities are organised imaginatively both indoors and outdoors, and creative use of space enables children to access areas freely. This includes providing areas for children to play and rest.

Most of the required records are available for inspection and accurately recorded. A comprehensive range of documentation that is well organised and regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects the service offered has been devised. This contributes effectively to children's well-being. Confidentiality is maintained because documents are kept secure. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Progress has been made since the last inspection. The childminder was asked to improve aspects of safety and hygiene. A padlock is in place on the garden gate to ensure there is no unsupervised exit by children and no unauthorised entry by strangers. Hygiene routines have improved because individual hand towels that children can identify as their own are in place. This results in safety and hygiene procedures within the setting being more effective. This ensures that the childminder is acting in the best interest of the children.

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):

- ensure that written parental permission is requested, at the time of placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice and treatment
- ensure that bleaches and cleaning materials are inaccessible to children.

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