

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY365092
Inspection date	15 May 2008
Inspector	Karen Cockings
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 2007. She lives with her husband and their two children, aged six and two years, in a village on the outskirts of Huddersfield. The house is within walking distance of local schools, play groups and other amenities. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding and one of the bedrooms and bathroom on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden at the rear of the house for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time. She currently minds two pre-school children and seven children of school age. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The childminder has a nursery nursing qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment, where the childminder maintains good standards of hygiene to protect them from the spread of infection. For example, she wipes table cloths with anti-bacterial spray before serving foods and follows safe hygiene practice when changing nappies. Children learn about the importance of hand washing as part of daily routines and the toilet area is easily accessible to them so that they begin to be independent in managing their own personal care. The childminder further protects children by sharing her policy with regard to the care of sick children with parents, so that they understand alternative arrangements need to be made if children have an infectious illness. Information is available about exclusion periods and notifiable diseases.

Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their overall good health. They walk to school and go on walks and outings in the surrounding area. Younger children love to play outside, having great fun with activities, such as chasing and catching bubbles. There is plenty of space for them to move around freely indoors, where they like to ride on the wheeled toy 'bug' and stretch out on the floor as they use construction toys and cars.

Healthy eating patterns are well promoted. The childminder provides all foods for children, sharing sample menus with parents in her welcome pack. A well balanced range of meals is offered, including fresh fruit and vegetables. At the end of each week the childminder discusses and agrees the menu with older children so that they can have some input into it and talk about their likes and dislikes. Snacks, such as fresh and dried fruit, breadsticks and carrot and cucumber sticks, are tasty and enjoyable. Drinks are readily available throughout the day. Children are involved in baking activities, which helps to develop independence and self-help skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is secure and welcoming to children and their parents. Children have their own labelled pegs in the entrance hall where they can leave their belongings, and a notice board is used well, to provide parents with lots of useful information. Appropriate measures are taken to keep the premises safe for children, such as having a safety gate in place to restrict unsupervised access to the stairs and keeping bleaches and cleansers out of children's reach. The childminder has completed formal risk assessments and she makes sure that she provides good levels of supervision. She uses only the patio area with younger children as she has identified hazards in relation to the use of the upper garden. Fire safety is addressed well; safety appliances, such as, smoke detectors and a fire blanket are in place and emergency evacuation procedures are displayed and practised with children.

During walks and outings children's awareness of safety issues is raised. For example, they learn how to cross roads safely, that they must always wear seat belts in the car and that they stay within view of the childminder when playing in the park. They access a varied range of toys and play materials, many of which are stored at child height so that they can make independent choices about their play. Children are gently encouraged to put toys away before getting others out so that they do not fall over them.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection. She ensures that relevant guidance materials are readily available and attends training to ensure that she has up-to-date knowledge about the procedures she should follow if she has any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. She responds warmly to them, maintaining a friendly dialogue as they play and during everyday routines, such as when she changes children's nappies. This helps children to feel secure and develops communication and social skills. She finds effective ways of enabling children to make choices about their play if they are not yet using language fluently. For example, she provides a photograph album where they can show her toys and activities they would like to play with. She invites children to share their wishes and hopes by writing these onto leaves to hang on the wishing tree. The childminder takes note of these and tries, where she can, to make them come true. For example, she may be able to plan a special outing the children have suggested or buy a new toy.

Children take part in a balanced range of activities, both inside and outdoors. The childminder does not formally plan, other than for outings, but she ensures that children enjoy a range of worthwhile play experiences, such as baking, making music, having a tea party and sharing books and stories. Children have their own books which are used as a photographic record of their involvement. The childminder has attended a number of workshops to develop her skills in supporting children's play and has enrolled for additional training related to observing and recording children's progress. She acknowledges this as an area for future development.

Children build positive relationships with the childminder and with each other. They learn how to play cooperatively together as she gently explains to them about the need to share and to take turns. The occasional minor disagreements are managed with patience and kindness. There is lots of laughter as children play games with the childminder, such as pretending to be asleep, then tickling each other until they wake up with smiles and giggles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a sense of belonging at the setting, where they see some of their work on display and know that their suggestions and ideas are valued. Regular outings and involvement in local groups help children to feel part of their local community. They have access to some resources that reflect positive images of different cultures and varying needs, although these are currently fairly limited. However, the childminder knows about local loan schemes and she plans activities to help children begin to appreciate each other's similarities and differences, such as tasting different foods at Chinese New Year and having a try at Chinese writing.

A positive approach is taken towards the management of children's behaviour and effective strategies are used, appropriate to the age and level of understanding of the child. The childminder establishes clear boundaries, making sure that children know what is expected of them. Older children discuss and agree house rules with her and have made a poster to display as a reminder to them all. The childminder's policy is shared with parents so that they have a clear understanding of the approach she takes. She comments positively when children are kind and helpful, which encourages them to feel good about themselves and builds self-esteem.

The childminder works closely with parents to meet children's individual needs and to maintain links with home. She completes a daily sheet for younger children, so that parents are well informed about significant events of their child's day. New parents are provided with an informative welcome pack, which gives them a good insight into the way the setting is run. Written agreements are drawn up to cover most aspects of children's care, although permission for outings is not clearly recorded. The childminder encourages parents to share any concerns with her and lets them know how they may take any issues further if necessary. Her complaints policy does not yet fully reflect current regulations, in terms of developing a complaints record to share with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and happy in the well organised environment. The childminder makes good use of space and resources to keep children safe and promote their learning and development. Written policies and procedures support the childminder's practice and help the setting to operate smoothly. Information for parents is well presented. Required records are maintained well and help to safeguard children's welfare.

The childminder is committed to the further development of her skills and knowledge. She has a nursery nursing qualification and prior experience of working in different settings and with children of varying ages. She has attended all required training and many other relevant courses and workshops.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- further develop systems for observing and recording children's progress, to identify the next steps in their learning
- continue to develop the range of resources and activities to help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences
- review the information available about complaints to ensure it fully reflects current regulations
- review written parental consents to ensure that permission for outings is more clearly recorded.

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