



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321230
Inspection date	19 December 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Beyer
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 1990. She lives with her family in a semi-detached house in the Acomb area of York. The home is close to local amenities, such as the school, play park, activity centres, library and childcare groups.

The whole of the ground floor is used for the purposes of childminding. One upstairs room is also registered to be used for overnight care. There is a large, secure rear garden which is suitable for outdoor play, with both grass and patio areas. The family has two cats.

The childminder co-minds with another registered childminder and currently has eight children on the register. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has attended a large number of relevant childcare training courses.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for on clean and well maintained premises, with good hygiene practice established to prevent the spread of infection. A clear policy is in place to take account of children's health and allergy needs, including any special diets. The children know they need to eat a healthy diet and they have fruit and breadsticks for snacks to support healthy eating. Parents provide packed lunches, which are stored in the fridge. Children develop independence at meal and snack times, sitting together and using the appropriate utensils. They chat to each other and enjoy their food. Drinks are available at all times to prevent dehydration and children are able to help themselves to water. Snack and breakfast menus are posted on the wall for parents to see and, if children stay overnight, the childminder ensures their evening meal meets parents' requirements.

A written sick child policy is in place and implemented to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Parents are contacted if their children are taken ill, in line with the procedure. Written permission for medication and to seek medical help or advice in an emergency is given by parents. There is a written procedure for illness of the minded children, the childminder or her own children. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and regularly checks the first aid box to ensure the contents are appropriately dated.

The childminder has undertaken extensive training to meet the different health needs of the children in her care, including asthma, eczema and infectious diseases. She has procedures for reporting serious accidents to Ofsted, with minor accidents being recorded and acknowledged by parents.

Children have fresh air each day, weather permitting, either going to school or playgroups, when using the garden, on walks to Rowntrees Park or local play areas. If children need to rest, they either use the settee, the buggy or, if staying overnight, the bed upstairs. Routines are discussed with parents when their children start to attend to ensure their needs can be met. Sleeping children are well supervised and checked regularly. If they use a comforter, this is provided.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for on premises which are secure and they are very well supervised by the childminder. They use furniture and equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development and are supported when need be. When children use small chairs instead of the high chair, the childminder supervises closely to ensure there are no accidents. The children know they must take care when playing with small toys so that the babies do not get hold of the pieces and they can use different areas of the premises to prevent access.

A personal safety plan has been written and the number of the emergency childminder is available. Parents know her and are happy their children will be safe in her care, should the

need arise. Children are only collected by authorised persons and parents give this information in writing. There is also a procedure in place for the loss or non-collection of children, with Ofsted details included for notification. Recording is available for any such incidents. Parents and the childminder carry cards in case of emergency, to notify people they may have children with a childminder or that they may not be the childminder's children.

Children practise the fire drill every month to ensure they become familiar with the procedure. It is displayed on the wall along with a plan of the premises. Fire equipment is in place and also checked regularly.

The childminder is very safety conscious, and when the conservatory was built, some of the window sills were high to provide shelf space for drinks or other dangerous items. She has also put safety devices on the toys boxes to prevent the lids falling. Equipment is regularly checked for damage and removed for disposal or repair if necessary. Parents are consulted about the safety of equipment and are able to raise any concerns they may have.

Children are protected by the childminder's excellent knowledge of child protection. She has written procedures in place, with contact details available for referrals and for notification of Ofsted. A written procedure is in place in the event of allegations being made against the childminder. She knows confidentiality must be respected and that parents may need support if concerns are raised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a wide range of stimulating learning opportunities for the children, with the 'Birth to three matters' framework used very effectively to support the care and education of the younger children. The care of the older children could be enhanced by the use of the Foundation Stage to ensure they are developing and learning well. Activities are planned weekly and developed to include seasonal activities, such as the winter scene with snowmen made from soap powder and the displays on the table in the extension. The programme of activities is posted on the notice board for parents to see. Parents and children are encouraged to bring items from home to develop the interest table, including a number of penguins brought by one family to sit in the snow.

Each child has a file for individual pieces of work and also development sheets, until they start to attend pre-school. The file is available to parents and includes information about activities, also such things as potty training. It is taken home when children leave the childminder's care.

Toys and resources are easily available and children can help themselves from the boxes or shelves. The childminder rotates the toys as the setting is very well equipped. The children like stories, sitting quietly to listen, but also participate and anticipate what is to happen next. They also like to do craft activities and baking. Pasta and pizza are very popular, with the children happily discussing the difference between dry and cooked pasta and the toppings used on their pizza.

During their games, the children learn to count and to develop their vocabulary. They are becoming articulate and well mannered, able to share and take turns. They are all very enthusiastic and keen to try new things.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has excellent relationships with the parents of the children she minds and involves them as much as possible in the children's care. Parents have initial interviews before their children start to attend, when they discuss their childcare needs and how they wish them to be met. They are given individual copies of the comprehensive policies and procedures used by the childminder to guide her practice, and made aware that she is registered to care for children overnight. When contracts and information sheets are reviewed each six months, parents are also asked to complete a questionnaire about the setting. This enables them to comment on the care their children receive and to raise any concerns or suggestions. All the parents are very happy with the childminder's outstanding care and support. They value the work she does to help their children develop successfully and have fun, including the wide range of stimulating activities and exciting outings she provides. The newsletters are also very much appreciated so the parents know which festivals are to be celebrated, the topics to be discussed or outings to be undertaken in the future. They know they are very welcome to contribute ideas and provide resources for the interest table in the extension, and are very keen to do so.

A daily diary is completed for parents of younger children, with information about activities, food, sleep and nappies recorded. Messages are also exchanged between the parents and childminder in case they forget during the verbal feedback they receive each day. Some photographs or pieces of work are included and parents can add their own contributions from weekend activities, such as a visit to see Father Christmas, so the childminder is aware of the child's activities if they talk about them. The children have their photographs taken both on the premises and when on outings, and can be seen thoroughly enjoying the opportunities provided. Parents of the older ones receive verbal feedback when they collect their children. The children and parents are all very comfortable in the childminder's home and thoroughly enjoy their contact with her.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are made welcome in the setting. The childminder has experience of caring for children with a wide range of different needs and has supporting information in her file about various problems which may arise. Contact with outside agencies in the past has helped to widen her knowledge and awareness. She also knows that children with long term health problems may have behaviour difficulties and takes account of these in her management of their care. Evidence is available to show how she has successfully cared for the children and monitored their progress.

The children behave extremely well. They are cared for in a very positive encouraging environment, where the childminder and parents communicate effectively to ensure consistency of management. Parents keep the childminder informed of any problems or concerns they think can affect the child's behaviour. While playing, the children co-operate very well, share, take turns and support each other. They know what is acceptable behaviour and encourage each

other to behave. The older children are also supportive of the younger ones. For example, during snack time they ensured the little children were able to access the fruit. All the children are developing very good manners and eat well at the table.

Children from different races and ethnic groups are very welcome in the setting, where the resources and activities provided reflect a multi-cultural society and children treat each other with respect. They develop positive images of those often discriminated against and help each other in an anti-discriminatory environment. Activities are planned to widen children's knowledge of other countries and cultures, and they celebrate festivals throughout the year, including Divali, Chinese New Year and Christmas with advice sought from parents to ensure information is correct. Children and parents with English as an additional language are supported very well, and the childminder helps them to settle successfully into the community. Both the children and parents are able to develop their language skills through conversation with the childminder and other children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder has created an excellent file for parents which contains information about the provision, and the policies and procedures she uses to manage her setting very safely and efficiently. It includes how the care impacts on the children and their parents and how it meets the inspection outcomes. An additional file gives information about the Standards and their implementation, which parents are also able to access freely. The complaints procedure is posted on the notice board and given to all parents in writing. The childminder displays her certificate at all times and is aware of the need to respect the conditions of registration. The children are very well supervised and if numbers rise, assistants are available to help.

Recording and paperwork is very well organised and kept up to date, with a current first aid certificate and relevant insurance policies in place. The childminder keeps Ofsted informed of any changes or significant events, such as the construction of the new conservatory. She also respects confidentiality and stores information about the children and their parents securely.

Training is an extremely important part of the childminder's practice, with a large number of courses used to widen her knowledge, including the Introduction and Development of Childminding Practice. She has also attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. A list of the courses in which she has participated is available for parents to see in the information file.

Contracts and information sheets, completed with parents, are renewed and checked each six months to ensure everyone is happy about the service provided and to accommodate any changes. Children's needs are monitored and discussed with parents to ensure the contracts are relevant and information is up to date. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has developed her use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide the activities she provides for younger children. She has also developed the use of the large areas of the premises to provide more variety.

The childminders all have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the management of the setting.

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):

- support older children's development further by use of, for example, the Foundation Stage guidance.

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