



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	400898
Inspection date	06 December 2006
Inspector	Linda Cook
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 satisfactory. 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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 10 and 12 years. They live in a town house in Thirsk, North Yorkshire. The property is within walking distance of the town centre and close to the local playgroup and school. The childminder attends the local playgroup and toddler group on a regular basis.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding as well as the two children's bedrooms and upstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. She is registered to care for six children and is currently caring for 12 children, all of them attend on a part-time basis. The family have a pet dog and a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a range of activities which effectively promote their physical health. They accompany the childminder to take the dog for a walk each day and enjoy visiting local play parks. They independently access the garden area where there is a good range of equipment to support physical activity for children of all ages. These include, a slide, wheeled vehicles, small trampoline, space hopper, scooters, skateboard and a variety of balls. Indoors, babies have clear space to move safely and freely and older children enjoy dancing and moving to music.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained home where they follow some good hygiene routines to protect their good health. They wash their hands after toileting, before eating and before helping to prepare food. They are provided liquid soap or hand cleansing gel. Downstairs they are provided with individual means of drying their hands. However, upstairs in the bathroom they share the same towel and while this is changed each day it does not fully safeguard children from cross-infection. The childminder has the appropriate documentation in place for the recording of accidents and medication, and has the written consent of parents to summon medical advice if necessary. This ensures children are appropriately cared for in an emergency.

Children are well nourished and begin to learn the benefits of healthy eating. While parents provide packed meals, the childminder provides additional snacks and drinks and these are varied and healthy. The children particularly like to help to use the juicer to make drinks from fresh fruit. The childminder discusses dietary requirements with parents and any specific requirements are recorded and catered for.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming home where risks are identified and minimised. As a result children are able to move freely and safely. The childminder has a range of safety features in place, for example, stair gates, socket covers, cupboard and window locks, fire blanket and smoke detectors. The garden is secure and a safety chain is used on the front door. The children learn how to keep themselves safe as they practise the emergency evacuation procedure, learn to cross roads safely and talk about stranger danger.

Children independently select resources from a broad range of clean, well maintained toys. The childminder ensures these are stored so children develop their independence. They make choices and choose what to play with from a range of resources safely within their reach.

The childminder has all the required documentation and procedures in place to ensure children's welfare is protected and promoted. She holds a current first aid certificate and has a sound understanding of child protection procedures. She has local authority information on file and displays child protection information for parents. There are clear procedures in place to ensure children are always collected by known people.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well at the childminder's house, freely moving around and choosing activities and resources which promotes their independence. They are confident in their surroundings and make themselves at home. Young children make their own decisions and instigate their own play both independently and with their peers. They have regular opportunities to bake, enjoy art and craft activities and particularly enjoy junk modelling. The childminder adapts the activities to ensure children of all ages can take part.

The children's play and development is well supported. The childminder spends her time interacting with the children helping them to build on what they know and can do, and enabling them to develop trusting relationships. She is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and while she instinctively implements most of the aspects, she has not yet attended training and the framework is not fully implemented. For example, young children have limited access to non specific and natural play materials which limits their opportunities to explore texture and form.

Children's work is valued and the children proudly take most art work home to show parents while other examples are displayed in the kitchen, providing children with a sense of belonging. School age children make their own choices and can be active or rest according to their individual needs and interests.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued and respected as individuals. The childminder discusses their daily routines and individual needs with parents and meets these effectively, which means children feel secure and settle well. There is a suitable range of resources which enable the children to appreciate diversity in our culture and all children have equal access to toys and activities. Children learn about their local community and have regular opportunities to mix with their peers when they go for walks, visit play parks, go shopping and attend playgroup and toddler group.

The children are well behaved and respond appropriately to the childminder's praise and guidance. The childminder has clear boundaries which children and their parents are made aware of. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, to be kind to each other and generally be aware of the needs of others. The childminder welcomes children with disabilities. She has a very positive approach to making adjustments and to working closely with parents and other professionals as appropriate. She has previous experience of working to clear individual care plans to ensure children's needs are fully recognised and met.

The childminder has a positive approach to working with parents. She discusses all issues with them before minding starts. She talks to them about the child's daily routines to ensure continuity of care. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. Verbal information is exchanged at delivery and collection, and daily diaries are completed for young children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel very much at home and at ease in the childminder's care. She provides a well organised and supportive environment which enables the children to move about freely and independently and develop positive self-esteem. Clear procedures help the service operate smoothly and efficiently, and are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children.

All aspects of the service are discussed with the parents, verbal and written information keeps them well informed about their child's activities. This helps to ensure that the children's care needs are being met continuously. The childminder organises her time well to ensure she is able to support the individual children and by offering a wide range of activities and experiences to ensure their progress and development is being fostered in all areas.

All the requirements of the National Standards for documentation and record keeping are met. Children's records are stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality. The childminder holds a Level 3 childcare qualification and has a positive approach to her ongoing development. This is demonstrated by her willingness to attend ongoing training and by keeping up to date with current changes. 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 was asked to complete an appropriate first aid course and obtain the written permission of parents before using plasters.

An appropriate first aid course was completed in 2004 and parents' written consent for plasters is obtained before they are used, ensuring children's good health is safeguarded.

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

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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 children are consistently provided with individual means of drying their hands and faces
- continue to develop learning outcomes for the under threes, for example, by fully implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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