

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303569
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Alexandra Cole

Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1993. She is registered to care for six children and is currently caring for seven children that attend for a variety of sessions. Of these, one child is over eight years of age. No funded children are currently attending. She lives with her husband and three children in a mid-terraced house in Triangle, near Halifax. There are shops, a park and a pre-school nearby.

The whole of the ground floor and the main bedroom and the bathroom are used for childminding purposes. Children access outdoor play in the garden to the rear of the property. The family has two pet dogs. The childminder is a member of the Calderdale Children Come First Childminding Network and the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn about good health and hygiene through daily routines. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating food and after using the toilet in order to prevent the spread of infection. Individual colour coded towels are provided which helps to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder provides a good example through following strict hygiene procedures. Effective systems are in place to ensure pets do not pose a health risk to children.

The childminder ensures children's interests are paramount and clear policies inform parents of the procedure should a child become ill whilst in her care. She has given them information about particular illnesses and exclusion times to ensure they fully understand the importance of protecting children from illness. Children are able to move freely within the home and they have a close relationship with the childminder who is caring and responsive to them. This helps children to feel confident to explore their surroundings and use their bodies to develop physical skills.

Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements and all of the procedures are followed correctly. Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. For example, every day they walk to and from school, as well as routine walks to local woodland and the river where they visit the ducks. Effective arrangements are in place to allow children to rest and sleep according to their individual needs and routines.

Children are well nourished because the childminder takes into account the wishes of parents to provide nutritious meals and snacks that meet their dietary needs. For example, all meals are home cooked using mostly organic ingredients and fresh fruit is provided on a daily basis. She has been awarded the 'Cute Fruit Plus' award in recognition of providing a healthy diet for the children. She helps children to understand the benefits of a healthy diet through talking to them about what is considered to be 'good and bad' foods, such as when she tells children that eating their lunch will make them 'big and strong'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment with examples of their work displayed around the home, contributing towards their sense of belonging. The childminder maintains her home in a good state of repair and decoration, and the layout of the furniture provides children with space so that they can play safely. Children are able to self-select from a wide range of toys and equipment that the childminder rotates on a regular basis. She ensures they conform to safety standards and checks and cleans them on a regular basis to ensure children are not exposed to hazards.

Risk of accidental injury is minimised by the childminder's appropriate practices and use of safety measures around the home. For example, children are well supervised and always within

her sight or hearing. However, although the gate leading out of the garden is lockable, this lock is within children's reach. The childminder is aware of the importance of risk assessments and proposes to conduct a thorough risk assessment of the front garden area when carrying out focussed activities with children.

Children effectively learn how to keep themselves safe on outings through the childminder talking to them about road safety. Additionally, children wear luminous jackets so that they are clearly visible on the walk to and from school. She gives children appropriate reminders so that they learn how to keep themselves safe within the home. For example, she reminds children not to run whilst inside.

The childminder is proactive in ensuring children learn about fire safety and precautions, such as smoke alarms, a fire blanket and a fire evacuation procedure are in place. She practises the fire evacuation procedure with children, ensuring they understand the course of action to take in an emergency. In order to extend children's awareness of fire safety the children have recently visited a local fire station. Children are well protected because the childminder understands her role in child protection and is able to put relevant procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house; they are confident and fully involved in their play. They relate very well to the childminder and have regular opportunities to develop their social skills through regular attendance at the local toddler group. Very warm and caring relationships are apparent between the childminder and children, contributing to their sense of belonging. The childminder responds to children's individual needs very well. Their development is well promoted through a good range of appropriate resources and well planned activities.

Children play happily together and with the childminder, for example, as they thoroughly enjoy pretending to make drinks of juice for everyone. They become independent as they are able to self-select from the good range of toys and resources, suitable to their age and stage of development. The childminder has a calm and caring manner with children. They respond well to her and are able to go to her for help and support when necessary. For example, when young children put their arms up for a cuddle when distressed and quickly settle when the childminder responds with a cuddle.

The childminder involves young children in early conversations as she repeats the sounds of their vocalisations during nappy changes. The childminder has a good understanding of children's needs and plans a good range of activities that promote their development. Children are involved, interested and enjoy their play. For example, as they spend a long period of time building a house with the building bricks. They develop their creativity through activities such as painting and dancing.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The childminder has a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. She is able to demonstrate how a suitable range of activities are planned in order to cover all areas of children's learning. Through documentation and discussion the childminder shows a satisfactory understanding of suitable activities to provide in order to help children progress towards the early learning goals. For example, she talks about an activity based on transport where children have the opportunity to travel in a car, train and a bus, prompting numerous opportunities for children to develop their language and understanding of the world around them. This activity is then extended where children practise their early reading skills though looking at books and develop their creativity through painting a wall collage of different types of transport. Written observations of children playing are carried out detailing children's progress towards the early learning goals and ways to further challenge children in a particular area of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are adequately met and they are fully included; the childminder values and appreciates all children. Children benefit from a settling in period and delight in seeing their comfort items from home when they are brought out at sleep time. She provides a suitable range of activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and of others. For example, she has incorporated festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, into the planning and children have access to a range of books and resources that reflect diversity.

Suitable arrangements are in place when children with learning difficulties or disabilities attend the setting. The childminder is able to use age appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour, such as distraction and redirection to other activities. A written behaviour management policy and simple house rules are in place, ensuring children understand the boundaries and play together harmoniously. Good behaviour is rewarded through praise and encouragement.

Through discussion the childminder demonstrated how particular activities are provided in order to ensure children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately. For example, children carried out activities based on a theme of living creatures where they followed the life of a snail. Discussions were held over the importance of being kind to living creatures and of ways to ensure their survival.

Partnerships with parents and carers is satisfactory. The childminder records all of the necessary information from parents and shares policies and procedures with them. They are invited to share in their child's developmental progress thorough daily verbal discussions and the opportunity to look at their child's developmental file when they wish. They have opportunities to view documentation relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum in order to promote their knowledge of how their child is progressing towards the early learning goals.

The childminder respects parents' wishes and keeps them well informed through giving them detailed written information about her service. Children settle well because she works closely with parents to gather information about their individual care needs. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress through the use of a daily diary as well as informal discussion.

This ensures that there is regular information sharing with parents and promotes continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All of the documentation required for the safe and effective management of children is in place and appropriate. Policies and procedures are used effectively and are very well organised. The childminder has completed all of the necessary background checks to ensure all adults living at the premises are suitable to be around young children.

The space and resources are organised well to enable children to participate in a good range of activities. The childminder is proactive in pursuing further training that enhances her childcare knowledge. The required adult to child ratios are met and provide good levels of care and support. In response, children are secure and confident in their surroundings. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to improve fire safety with regard to smoke alarms and the obstruction of fire exits. She was asked to improve the system for recording children's attendance and the administration of medication. Improvements were required that related to the safety of wires and plug sockets and the childminders knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. Good progress has been made and smoke alarms are now fitted and fire exits are now clear. Improvements have been made to the system of recording children's attendance and documentation relating to medication. The childminder has attended training on child protection issues and previous risks relating to wires and plug sockets have been minimised.

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.

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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):

- make the gate in the garden safe or inaccessible

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- there are no recommendations raised, as there were no funded children on roll at the time of inspection.

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