

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	400821
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
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 1996. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and 19 years old. They live in a semi-detached house situated on the north side of Scarborough. Mainly the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding; children only access to first floor to use the bathroom. There is an enclosed rear garden which can be used for outside play.

There is a range of facilities including the park and the beach nearby. There are links with local schools and pre-schools where children are collected and taken. Children are not usually transported by car. There are currently four children under eight years on roll who attend on a part time basis. Older children are also cared for.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a warm, homely environment where they learn about sensible hygiene practices. The older children know which is their colour coded face cloth and younger

children have their hygiene needs met. The childminder makes sure that she always has wipes for the children when they are out. The children develop a positive approach to being active in the outdoors they walk to school or playgroup each day. In better weather the children enjoy games on the nearby beach when this can be arranged around the children's arrival and departure times.

Meals are provided by parents; this means that the quality of food is variable but the childminder provides a range of additional snacks such as crisps or biscuits and she makes sure that the fruit bowl is well stocked. The younger children know which is their cup and are praised warmly by the childminder as they practise with their spoon. This means that they develop their independence to a good level. The childminder makes sure that the children do not become dehydrated by encouraging them to rest with a drink when they get in after school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Although some work is being carried out on the house and garden, the children can play freely in the very family-friendly environment because the childminder identifies potential hazards in the home and minimises them in relation to the age group of the children attending. A real strength of the childminder is in how she devises ways for the children to learn about their own safety. The older children are very confident in the rules for walking to and from school and the younger ones learn to climb on and off the sofa and use the stairs. The children also know how to leave the premises in an emergency because the childminder talks to them about this. There is a range of play equipment for the children which is in good safe condition and the children use the childminder's domestic furniture freely for their rest and play.

The childminder is confident about her responsibility to the children in relation to safe-guarding their welfare. She keeps all the necessary local and national guidance on file for advice should she need it and has a good awareness of the content.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are relaxed and confident in the homely childminding environment and they enjoy their time with the childminder and her family. The little ones snuggle in for a cuddle as they wake comforted by the familiar surroundings. As they become more awake they chat happily to the childminder and babble to their favourite toys. The young children develop their language skills to a good level because the childminder engages them in conversation about their lunch or their toys. They chatter with delight when they are praised warmly when they try their first words. The older children also develop their communication skills by going through their reading books that they bring home from school. Sometimes, during the longer school holidays the children become very involved in reading marathons organised by the local library. This further promotes their interest in this.

The children enjoy the creative play. The youngest children enjoy feeding their toys with the pretend tea set and they act out familiar experience with the dolls and the buggies. Older children express themselves in their art and craft work. There are craft materials and paints available but the children mainly enjoy drawing after school. Sometimes the children like to relax as they make play dough shapes and models. This approach means that all children can take part at their own level. The childminder plans activities in relation to the age-group of children attending. Although the children do not have easy access to the full range of activities

and resources, the childminder rotates the equipment, encouraging the children to request their favourites, to provide them with as much choice and variety as possible.

The childminder helps the children to develop their mathematical skills. For example, she helps the little one to complete simple jigsaws and puzzles. The older children enjoy counting different coloured cars on their way to school and the often look at house numbers so that they learn to recognise familiar numerals. There is also a range of table-tops games which help the children to develop their mathematical skills and their memory.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder gets to know the children and their families very well and she talks fondly about their individual needs and dispositions. She talks to the parents daily about their children's needs and is attentive to the children as they chat to her on the way home from school. This helps the children to feel valued and respected and contributes to the warm, homely environment and it ensures that the children's individual needs are easily met. The pleasant environment and the clear explanations means also that the children are relaxed, confident and behave very well. The long standing nature of the care arrangements is also a significant factor in the positive relationships that the children enjoy. The childminder has some resources showing positive images of cultural diversity but due to the storage situation these are not always easily available to the children.

The childminder works well with parents. All necessary registration information is displayed for parents and contractual agreements and recording systems are in place so that misunderstandings do not occur. Feedback to parents about how the children have spent their time is mainly verbal although important information about accidents and medication is always in writing. The childminder has also used a daily diary when she has had young babies attending. The childminder is an effective link between parents and school. The children's teachers and playgroup leaders know her well and she passes on messages to parents. Parents write thank you cards for the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

On a practical level the childminder is well-organised. She attends to the children's needs diligently and the daily routines promote the children's safety and well-being. The property is organised so that the children can find their own space according to their age groups or friendships. For example, the older children often like to relax in the lounge after school whilst the younger ones play in the dining room. They are all very happy in the homely environment.

The childminder has done all necessary training such as first aid and has done some additional training such as child protection and fire safety through her work with the Brownie movement. However, evidence of this, as with other aspects of the provision, is not always clear. Similarly, the childminder has filed most information from Ofsted and the local authority relating to the changes in the National Standards but admits that keeping up to date is sometimes difficult. All necessary documentation is in place, kept up to date and stored effectively. 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 develop a written complaints procedure. After the inspection she made a written complaints statement available to the parents using the service at the time although she did not keep a copy for future parents or inspection purposes. The childminder has the Ofsted poster with relevant contact numbers for parents and an informal system for logging any concerns they might have.

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

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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):

- help children to accept diversity in society by making a range of resources promoting equality of opportunity more easily available to them on a regular basis
- keep up to date with childcare issues and ensure that evidence of training and development is easily available.

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