

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 319839 |
| Inspection date | 22 February 2007 |
| Inspector | Christine Anne Rice |
| 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, who has been registered since 1987, lives with her husband and adult son. They live in a semi-detached house in Otley, a suburb of Leeds. The lounge, dining/kitchen and upstairs bathroom and toilet are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

Parks, shops, library and school are all within walking distance.

There are currently nine children on roll.

The childminder is a member of local childminding group and uses a toy library.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because the childminder implements her comprehensive policies and procedures with regard to sickness, medication and accidents. There is also some good hygiene

practice, since the children learn, for example, from the childminder when and why they should wash their hands. However, the system for nappy changing is satisfactory rather than good as the childminder uses individual towels, which cannot be cleaned after each use. These towels are then washed at the end of the week, and in between times if they become dirty.

Children develop independence as they have continuous access to water and they are encouraged to feed themselves with spoons. The children benefit from a healthy diet that is well balanced, nutritious and complies with individual dietary needs. For snacks, the childminder usually provides fruit, such as slices of apple on a platter so that the children can easily help themselves. Standards of hygiene in the kitchen are good as the childminder, who has obtained a food hygiene certificate, implements her knowledge well.

The children gain plenty of fresh air and exercise as they play in the childminder's secure and safe garden and make frequent trips to playgrounds and parks, where they burn off energy. Young children feel emotionally secure as the childminder gives them a lot of individual attention and reassuring cuddles. Children have sufficient rest as the childminder effectively recognises signs of tiredness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, warm, well maintained home where they are able to independently select from a good range of age appropriate toys, conveniently stored at their level. The toys are clean and safe as the childminder regularly checks them, discarding any broken ones. Children stay safe as the childminder instinctively risk assesses activities. The childminder knows the children well and ensures that they cannot run into the road by using reins as an added safeguard to holding hands. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as the childminder teaches them about road safety as they are walking to nursery.

The childminder is very diligent in ensuring children are safe indoors and outdoors. Doors, for example, are kept locked with the keys easily accessible in case of emergency evacuation. The garden is secure with the gate locked to prevent children escaping or unwanted visitors entering. Potential fire hazards are identified and made safe. Consequently the fire is safely guarded, there is a stairgate, there are locks on the kitchen cupboard doors and sharp and dangerous objects are kept out of the reach of the children. The childminder takes all opportunities to practise the fire evacuation plan, such as when the toast burns so that the children know what to do in the event of a fire.

The childminder uses toys, equipment and materials very effectively to ensure children are provided with a balanced range of activities that support children's learning in all areas. For example, children use small spoons for eating, toilet seats and high chairs. However, children sleep in their pushchairs, which does not allow them to sleep flat and may detract from their overall well being. With regard to child protection, the children are well protected as the childminder has a good knowledge and is very aware of her responsibilities towards them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The setting provides well for the children attending since the childminder is very alert to the importance of providing age appropriate activities and resources, which are stimulating and fun for all. Activities are well organised. As a result, children are involved in a good range of

activities both inside and outside and are happy and settled. Children enjoy baking, playing with dough and authentic bandages as part of role play, and various craft activities. Outdoors, the children play in the paddling pool in the shade, on the sit and ride toys, in the play house and pretend to paint with water and real brushes. Outings to zoos, farms and gardens supplement the children's outdoor play and keep the children's interest, enabling them to learn about the natural world.

Children have plenty of opportunities for socialising as they attend toddler and childminder groups several times each week. A wide and varied range of toys and equipment provide challenge and enjoyment for all the children. The quality of the childminder's interactions enhances the play experience for the children. When the children choose a book to look at, for instance, the childminder encourages the children to respect the book and turn the pages carefully. She asks them about the animals they are looking at and the noises they make. The children are delighted when they see a snake and she hisses enthusiastically with them. The children develop self-esteem as the childminder praises and encourages them.

Children make decisions as they choose which tapes to play, then the childminder joins in singing along to the nursery rhymes. The songs help the children to develop language as they practise making sounds and letters. The children's language development is further developed by the childminder talking to them about what they see when they are out walking. Conversations range from cement mixers and building works to aeroplanes and the colour of cars.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Appreciating the different personalities of the children she cares for, the childminder spends time getting to know them and then treats them very much as individuals. As a result children feel valued and settle easily. Children are encouraged to be independent and responsible by setting the table, putting on their own shoes and helping younger ones. Children develop an awareness of the diversity of the world through using different play materials, such as books, toys and games, which reflect positive images of culture and gender. All children are included in activities so that on pancake day, for instance, every child whisks and stirs the mixture.

The childminder's positive attitude and commitment towards inclusion extends to children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Having attended a variety of courses, such as Makaton, the childminder is well prepared for caring for children with a range of needs. Currently she cares very successfully for children with particular needs relating to balance and sight and asthma. In consultation with the parents, the childminder provides a safe, but stimulating environment where the children can explore and develop confidence.

Behaviour is managed positively and consistently and according to the children's level of understanding and maturity. The childminder discusses behaviour with older children and uses distraction and redirection techniques for younger children. Sometimes children are withdrawn for a couple of minutes. Explanations as to why behaviour is unacceptable help children to learn right from wrong.

Partnerships with parents are good and constructive with much information, both written and verbal, being shared between the two throughout the child's care with the childminder. Because the childminder respects the parents' views and wishes, she happily follows their instructions

with regard to such matters as their children's sleeping arrangements. Consequently children benefit from the effective working partnership between the childminder and their parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Having been a childminder for a number of years, the childminder is very experienced. Her interest and dedication is demonstrated by her regular attendance on local relevant short courses. As a result, the childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards. She continually reflects on her practice, striving to keep the children stimulated and the activities fresh. There are four weekly plans, which are flexible to accommodate the children's needs and cover the six areas of learning.

All required documentation is in place. The childminder implements a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are kept in a file and are available to parents. These, together with the good, effective records contribute to the efficient and safe management of the childminding service.

The childminder makes good use of her space and time, which benefits the children. Required adult:child ratios are met and good levels of care and supervision ensure children are well supported. The childminder demonstrates her organisational skills since she successfully caters for a number of children who have to be taken to and collected from school and nursery at different times.

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

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. 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 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):

- improve hygiene procedures in relation to nappy changing

- extend the facilities for children when they sleep.

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