

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319958
Inspection date	18 March 2008
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 1995, lives with her three children aged 16, 13 and nine years, in the Wigton Moor area of Leeds. There are primary schools, a pre-school, a park, shops and bus stops within walking distance. She is currently caring for two school age children on a part-time basis and works elsewhere for part of the week. The childminder escorts children to and from Wigton Moor Primary School. The whole of the ground floor and the toilet and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and of the local childminding group, where she takes advantage of a variety of training sessions.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder's attention to hygiene is good; her home is clean and safe for children. The children are encouraged in good hygiene procedures, such as washing their hands prior to

eating and before preparing food for tea. The use of antibacterial hand gel and individual towels affords the children further protection against cross infection. In addition, the childminder has thorough policies and procedures in place to minimise the spread of infection and to ensure that the children are safe and well cared for if, for example, they are ill or need medication. If the children were to suffer any minor injuries, the childminder is well prepared because she has a current first aid certificate, a fully stocked first aid kit and a portable one for outings. In addition, all accidents are carefully recorded and parents countersign these records.

Children benefit from eating healthy and nutritious food for tea. Typical menus include spaghetti bolognaise and garlic bread, followed by yogurt or fruit for dessert. Children learn about healthy eating and develop independence as they sometimes help to prepare their own meal, such as when they make pizzas, adding toppings of their choosing. The children stay refreshed as the childminder offers them a drink of milk or water and ensures that fresh water is always available in a covered jug in the kitchen, so that children may help themselves when they are thirsty. Children have good opportunities to gain fresh air and exercise as they play in the garden, use the trampoline, often visit the park and go bowling in the holidays.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment, which is well-organised. There are comfortable settees where they may relax and ample floor space, where they spread out their toys and activities. The children develop independence as they choose from a good range of resources, which are easily accessible as they are stored in well-labelled transparent boxes. Toys are rotated to maintain the children's interest. The childminder has a good stock of equipment, such as a travel cot, high chairs, a pram and car safety seats to meet the developmental needs of children, whatever their age.

A good range of safety equipment is available and in use, taking into account the age of the children being cared for. For example, all sockets are covered, risks are assessed and the garden is fully enclosed and secured with a padlock. Children may only use the trampoline, which is located in the back garden and surrounded by a safety net, one at a time under the close supervision of the childminder. The outer doors are alarmed and kept locked to prevent strangers entering unannounced and children leaving unattended. The childminder has devised an emergency evacuation plan, which the children practise, although not very often, yet the children develop their understanding of fire safety through a quiz. A fire blanket in the kitchen, smoke alarms on both levels of the house and a carbon monoxide sensor offer further protection. Children learn to contribute to their own road safety as the childminder has a relevant policy, illustrated by a poster, reminding children to take care and be alert to the dangers posed by cars when walking to school.

Children are protected as the childminder has a good understanding of issues relating to child protection. She keeps her knowledge fresh through undertaking training courses on the Internet. The childminder has a clear policy, which is shared with parents and has up to date information about the procedures to follow in the event of a concern arising.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have good relationships with the childminder, who is sensitive to their needs. They are settled and remain in the care of the childminder for several years, from being infants to

going to high school. The children interact well together and spend a great deal of time playing happily and cooperatively with the toy animals. Children benefit from a good range of toys and activities, which are suitable for all ages, with, for example, a pool table and basketball for older children and small world toys for younger children.

The children enjoy good opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination as they have access to a broad variety of art and craft materials, including different coloured card and paper, glitter and clay. They enjoy making glitter pictures of cats and dough dollies, plus Easter cards and baskets. Outdoors, the children develop physical skills, such as coordination, as they play ball games, including catch, cricket and football. Children learn about the natural world as, in the holidays, they go on various outings to places of interest, such as zoos, stately homes, parks, farms and adventure playgrounds. The children participate in the local community by, for example, baking buns to sell at school to raise money for charity.

The childminder encourages the children's all-round development as she helps children to build self-esteem, praising them for the lovely colouring on their cards. She supports children with their learning, helping them with their homework and assisting them with their reading, as she has a stock of books which coincide with the reading scheme at the local school. A further interest in reading is fostered as the childminder has set up a book club and the children make regular trips to the library to change their books.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Since the childminder values the children as individuals, she is knowledgeable about them and tailors their care according to their particular needs, providing extra support, for instance, as appropriate. Children develop an awareness of the diversity of the world in which they live through the use of good resources, such as toys, books and activities, which reflect positive images of gender, disability and different cultures. In addition, children and parents share their cultural heritage with all the children in the setting by, for instance, hosting an 'Indian night', when the children dress up in saris, eat Indian food and experience henna painting.

The childminder, who is receptive to the idea of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, has some relevant experience and training and is happy to work with parents and professionals in meeting the children's needs. Children learn appropriate boundaries and good behaviour through the childminder's consistent and constructive approach. The childminder engages the children as they draw up house rules, which are pinned to the notice board and serve as a reminder of the kind of behaviour which everyone expects. Good manners are encouraged, star charts reward positive acts and child friendly explanations and a few minutes time out are used for any unacceptable behaviour.

The childminder works in partnership with the parents, respecting their wishes with regard to the children's care, including their diet and routines. There is a good exchange of information at the outset, when the parents receive a welcome pack, which provides information about the setting and includes a copy of all the childminder's main policies. Regular reviews help the childminder to identify any areas for improvement and parents are kept informed through daily verbal feedback and termly newsletters. Parents are very appreciative and describe the care their children receive as of a 'consistently good quality'.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit as the childminder is meticulously organised and completely up to date with her practice. For instance, all information and contact details, such as telephone numbers of child protection agencies and parents' mobile phones, are regularly reviewed in order to safeguard the children. In addition, the childminder implements an exemplary range of policies and procedures, which are constantly updated and contribute to the safe and most efficient management of the childminding service. Parents receive a copy of these policies when they join the setting and subsequently every year. Furthermore, they sign to acknowledge that they have read them.

The childminder, who is very experienced, is firmly committed to childminding, keeping her knowledge fresh by attending a variety of short courses, including speech and language, food hygiene awareness and a sound workshop. Such is her commitment that, although she is not currently caring for any children of Foundation Stage age, she intends to undertake training in the new Early Years Foundation Stage so that she is fully equipped to care for younger children.

Required ratios are generously met and the childminder makes excellent use of her space and time, managing to accommodate very effectively the needs of a varied age range of school children. Children are given very good, sensitive support and encouragement, which ensures they feel secure, confident and happy in the childminder's care. They thoroughly enjoy their activities and are totally at ease in this calm, harmonious atmosphere.

All required documentation is accurately maintained and stored securely in the interests of confidentiality. Parents may view the childminder's certificate of registration, which is prominently displayed, together with the regulator's poster, a laminated poster of the resources available and the most important policies, such as that relating to complaints. Children are protected since the childminder has no visitors to the premises when she is minding and the emergency contingency arrangements only involve people who have completed the requisite checks. In addition, the childminder is exceptionally comprehensive in obtaining all relevant written permissions from parents.

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 ensure that the fire blanket is readily accessible.

Since the last inspection, the childminder has made the fire blanket more accessible, which has a positive impact on the children's safety.

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

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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):

- practise the emergency escape plan more frequently.

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