

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311214
Inspection date	03 October 2007
Inspector	Helene Anne Terry

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 1992. She lives with her two children aged 15 and 17 years in a semi-detached property in Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. Areas of the home used for the children include the dining room, lounge, kitchen and bedroom and bathroom on the first floor of the property. The garden is used for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. At present she has six children on roll between the ages of 18 months and six years; most of whom attend for various sessions throughout the week. The childminder takes children to and from the local school. The family has two dogs, a rabbit and fish.

The childminder regularly attends toddler and childminding groups. She is a childminding mentor and a member of the local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a friendly home environment where they can play, rest and sleep according to their individual needs. They develop their understanding about simple hygiene practices and personal care through their daily routine and with the effective role modelling from the childminder. For example, the children wash hands after playing outside, after using the toilet, after having nappy changes and before eating. The childminder instils this in the children from an early age to help them develop good routines of their own. Children also have the use of their own face cloths, towels and bed linen to prevent cross infection. In addition, they learn about hygiene through activities. There are posters displayed that remind children of when they should wash their hands, for example, after touching the animals. Children are protected from infection because the childminder ensures the home, toys and equipment are clean and measures are in place, such as a 'sick child' policy alongside other excellent health and safety procedures.

All necessary consent has been obtained from parents to ensure the children's health is maintained. The childminder is trained in first aid to ensure that children receive prompt and appropriate treatment for any accidents and is confident in the care she provides. She holds a current first aid certificate. The childminder maintains very well all the required records to promote children's health, including accident and medication records that are shared with parents. Younger children's personal care is fully supervised. The childminder checks nappies frequently and changes these as required following good hygiene practice with her routines.

Children's individual dietary needs are met by the childminder taking into account parents' wishes. They enjoy healthy meals and snacks that the childminder supplies. For example, fruit and a drink for snack time, followed by a light lunch and fully cooked, freshly prepared tea. The childminder encourages children's choices at meal times. She has produced a sample menu, in the form of photographs, where children choose their meals at lunch time and tea time. These include lots of fruit and vegetables to promote health and growth. Children are offered a choice of drinks on a regular basis to ensure they remain hydrated. These are accessible in their own cups throughout the day.

Children enjoy a stimulating range of equipment to promote a healthy lifestyle and their physical development. They practise and develop skills through well planned activities both indoors and outdoors. The garden is planned to incorporate different activities to encourage children to use their bodies in different ways. For example, they ride on bikes, climb and balance on the slide and swing. Children enjoy a range of outings that further develop and promote physical skills. They go for walks, dance to music, visit adventure playgrounds and toddler groups and enjoy trips to the parks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that allows them to be relaxed and feel very much at home. This is evident in the way children are very happy and settled and show a strong sense of belonging. There is space to play, explore and move independently. The childminder supervises the children and is on hand to interact and support their play. Children are extremely safe in and out of the home because of the stringent measures the childminder employs to protect

them. For example, the home and places they visit are fully risk assessed and there is an agency security system employed. Children also learn how to keep themselves safe. They have opportunity to practise fire evacuation procedures to develop their understanding of how to leave the home in the event of an emergency. They follow safety rules, such as staying together, holding hands and the buggy and all children learn road safety rules.

Children are welcomed into a stimulating, child orientated environment with an abundance of high quality toys and equipment. This is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Although most of the resources are stored in the garage, the childminder uses a good system to promote choice. She has a booklet that contains photographs of all her toys and children choose what they like to play with. The layout of the play areas ensures children can act independently. They use child size table and chairs to ensure that they access activities easily. The childminder encourages children to help tidy away so they can play safely and gain a respect for the equipment. Play materials are challenging, exciting and stimulating and give children opportunities to extend their learning through child-initiated play.

The childminder has a clear understanding of child protection issues and the signs and symptoms to look for. She is fully aware of documenting and reporting any concerns and keeps all records up to date to provide excellent evidence of her practice in order to ensure children remain protected. All supporting documents are available to refer to in the event of a concern. These include the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well-settled, content and happy at the childminder's home. They are secure and confident in themselves and with the other children attending. The different age groups play well alongside one another and the younger children are beginning to learn to share and take turns. Children's independence skills are developing well, they are encouraged to visit the bathroom, with a little support, help tidy away and make decisions about what they want to play. Younger children's concentration is developing as they find toys that hold their interest, such as musical toys and shape sorters.

Children enjoy a range of planned and spontaneous activities. The childminder plans activities around themes and topics, such as colours, shapes and numbers. She has a clear understanding of how children learn and develop. Although she provides activities in line with their interests and abilities, she is not clearly using children's development records to plan for their next stage in development. The childminder has a suitable understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is beginning to use this to record observations of what children can do. Children enjoy joining in with creative activities, doing art work, stencilling and pattern rubbings. They are developing early literacy skills as they learn to write their own names on their pictures and ask questions about what the book says. As a result, children are beginning to understand that writing carries meaning. Younger children enjoy listening to stories, where they observe the pictures and talk about the colours that they see. They take part in many sensory activities to stimulate their development, such as treasure baskets, and play with shaving foam and paint. All the children enjoy playing with the dried pasta shapes in a large container as they pour it into different receptacles; shake it to listen to the sound, and some children pretend to make meals and cups of tea with it in the play kitchen.

Children enjoy various toddler groups in the area where they experience different types of play and learning. They can use different equipment and acquire new skills. This has the added

effect on the opportunities children have to be social with others and gain confidence to play with other children and adults.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent positive attitude and provides children with a well-balanced view of the world around them and an awareness of diversity through activities, discussion, books and other resources. For example, children enjoy playing with toy guide dogs, dolls in wheelchairs and small family figures showing disability. They also play with dolls from different cultures and enjoy an excellent range of books. This helps children to understand and respect difference and acknowledge diversity. Children greatly benefit as the childminder has an inclusive policy, making her activities and resources accessible to all children. Children have access to an environment where they can all flourish through interactive experiences. They are able to develop at their own pace and this is reflected in the admirable way children are cared for. A complete profile is gained from parents about their child including their routines and medical history. This enables the childminder to tailor her care to meet the needs of each child and to help them settle in to her care. Through discussion she reveals that she is proactive in identifying children with learning difficulties and disabilities and works well with parents to ensure all children reach their full potential.

The children are very happy and secure and play extremely well together. The childminder makes consistent efforts to make children feel welcome and spends good quality time building trusting relationships. The childminder talks to the children using a calm and patient tone of voice and gets down to their level when giving explanations. Children respond to the boundaries in place because they receive extremely good guidance and positive interaction with the childminder. The childminder discusses the house rules with the children, therefore they know what is expected of them. They share well, are cooperative, use good manners and are polite and friendly. Children enjoy frequent praise and encouragement to help them develop self-esteem and to gain an understanding of right from wrong. This gives children a good benchmark to work from when learning to manage and control their own behaviour. The childminder also uses a reward chart of smiley faces and children receive a treat once they have five stickers on the board.

Superb relationships with parents ensure that the individual needs of the children are met very effectively as they share responsibility together. This impacts on the children's feelings of trust and security. Parents are involved in the time their child spends in the setting by receiving excellent verbal feedback and access to their child's development records. The childminder keeps a daily journal for parents of young babies and records meals, drinks and nappy changes. Parents are provided with excellent and comprehensive written information about the organisation of the setting. They read and sign the policies and procedures, receive an information leaflet, regular newsletters and access the notice board that has information about the current activities. Parent and child questionnaires are also used as part of the childminder's evaluation of her services she offers to families. Parents confirm their high satisfaction of the care their children receive through glowing references about the childminder's flexibility, professionalism and caring nature.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and feel secure and comfortable in this well-organised 'home from home' environment. The space, resources and daily routine are organised very well to benefit children as they play and take part in activities in and out of the home. Documentation that very effectively underpins the setting is outstanding and very well organised. This is used effectively to promote the care and welfare of each child. Records are shared with parents and are reviewed and updated as required. The children's daily routine is purposefully organised to meet their individual needs, such as sleep patterns, school runs, meals, trips out to toddler groups and other outdoor play and time for free play.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's awareness of the importance of record keeping. She maintains ratios in order to be able to fully support each child and meet their individual needs. In addition, she occasionally works with an assistant. The childminder continues to add to her own personal development through attending a wide range of training courses. She also has a level 3 qualification in early years. The childminder regularly monitors and evaluates the service she offers to ensure a high standard is maintained and she is currently working towards a Quality Assurance Award with the local authority. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection it was recommended that improvements were made to the complaints procedure. Good improvements have been made to enhance children's welfare. The complaints procedure is up to date and contains the contact details for Ofsted.

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):

- further develop the use of children's development records to highlight what the children can do and use these to plan for the next stage in their development.

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