

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401105
Inspection date	31 October 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 satisfactory. 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 June 2000, works alongside another childminder. She is registered to care for five children or 10 children when co-minding. There are currently 13 children being cared for and children attend on a full- or part-time basis. The childminder lives with her partner and two year old son in a through terraced property in a residential area close to the centre of Ripon. On the ground floor children have access to a through lounge, kitchen and bathroom. Children have access to an upper paved area of the garden for outdoor play. Local amenities include parks, local shops and the riverside. The childminder attends local toddler groups and a school and nursery collection and drop off service is offered. Pets include a cat and goldfish. The childminder has completed the Diploma in Childcare and Education and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder promotes hygiene routines well by, for instance, cleaning babies' hands with wipes before snacks. Older children wash their hands appropriately, such as before eating and

after going to the toilet. As a result, the risk of the spread of infection is reduced. Children are protected because the childminder keeps careful records, for instance, with regard to accidents, any existing injuries and the administration of medication. All appropriate written parental permissions are in place to protect the children further. However, due to a delay in accessing a suitable course, the childminder's first aid certificate has expired. The childminder is currently updating her knowledge as she is undertaking the necessary first aid training, which she expects to complete by the end of November.

Children are well nourished as the childminder promotes healthy eating. Snacks, for instance, consist of yogurt and various fruits, including apple, banana and satsumas, plus more exotic fruits such as kiwi and mango. Some children bring their own food to the setting. Others benefit from the varied menus the childminder prepares, such as spaghetti Bolognese and chilli and vegetables. The children stay refreshed as they have constant access to water, which is always available on a table at the side of the room. They rest according to their needs and parental wishes and have lots of opportunities for fresh air and exercise through walks to the park and to nursery and school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained home, where they are able to explore and choose activities safely. Toys are easily accessible as they are mainly stored at child level in crates on the floor. This arrangement promotes the children's independence and freedom of choice. The childminder provides equipment to promote the children's all-round development, since she has, for instance, children's chairs, a double buggy and a high chair. However, none of the children's work is displayed, which detracts from the otherwise welcoming nature of the setting.

Children are safeguarded through the use of a suitable range of equipment, including corner protectors on the edges of furniture, a fireguard, a safety gate at the foot of the stairs and one between the living room and kitchen. In addition, outer doors are kept locked to prevent strangers entering unannounced and children leaving unattended. Children learn to contribute to their own safety through the practising of the fire escape plan and through observing road safety as they walk to the park. Added protection includes a fire blanket and smoke alarms at both levels of the house.

The childminder has a sound knowledge of child protection and is aware of her responsibilities towards the children in her care. These are made clear to the parents, who all receive a copy of the childminder's written child protection policy. Consequently, the children in her care are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle easily and well, so that they are emotionally secure and confident in the childminder's care. They have a good relationship with the childminder, who spends a lot of time with the children, constantly interacting with them. Babies are encouraged to vocalise as the childminder maintains good eye contact with them and echoes the noises that they make. This helps the children become skilful communicators. The childminder explains what she is doing, so that the children can begin to link words with actions. Children smile happily in response to the childminder's attention and conversation with them.

All children develop independence as older children are able to pour themselves a beaker of water from the jug, in the living room, whilst younger children choose to have a drink whenever they want to as their beakers are always readily accessible. The children help themselves to a wide range of age-appropriate toys, which the childminder rotates to maintain the children's interest. When children play with cars, the childminder helpfully shows them the garage to extend their play and sits on the floor with the children to help them maximise the value of their play.

Children have many opportunities to socialise and develop bonds with their peers as they attend several local toddler groups and meet with other childminders and their minded children. In addition, they enjoy good access to physical activities as they regularly use the play equipment in the nearby park. The children extend their knowledge of the wider world as they go on outings to places of interest and feed the ducks on the river. The children develop their imagination and creativity through various craft activities, such as making collage animals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a happy, settled environment, where they are valued and treated as individuals. Children learn about and respect diversity as the childminder has a good range of resources, such as books, toys, small world figures and felt activities, which reflect positive images of people from different backgrounds and with disabilities. Additionally, the childminder acts as a good role model in caring for children from various cultures.

The childminder is receptive to the idea of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Responsibly, she says that she would also need to consider the needs of the children she is already minding to ensure that all the children's needs are met and recognises the importance of reviewing and evaluating any work in this area. The childminder manages behaviour positively and consistently, according to the child's level of understanding and maturity and in tune with her written behaviour management policy. There are child-friendly explanations for inappropriate behaviour and praise for good behaviour, which help the children develop self-esteem.

There are good relationships between the childminder and the parents, who are kept well informed as they receive their own copy of all the childminder's policies and procedures at the outset. There is a good exchange of information between the childminder and the parents through daily diaries for the younger children and regular verbal feedback. In addition, the childminder is very accommodating of the parents' needs and is sensitive to their wishes with regard to the care of their children, taking into account, for example, sleeping and eating preferences. To date, the childminder has received no complaints. Nevertheless, she has a written complaints policy, which is shared with parents, though the regulator's contact details are not current.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder, who co-minds with another registered childminder, is suitably qualified, since she has a diploma in childcare practice and has a sound knowledge of the National Standards. Generally the childminder is well organised, although there has been a delay in the updating of her first aid training. All relevant checks have been completed on the members of the household and the childminder has appropriate public liability insurance.

Because the childminder is flexible, she accommodates children's routines, making herself available to take them to school and nursery and collect them at the appropriate times. The childminder has a keen awareness of the need to protect children and does not allow the children to be left unsupervised with anyone who has not been properly vetted.

All required documentation is in place and there is a range of policies and procedures, which benefit the children and ensure the efficient and safe running of the childminding service. Parents receive a copy of all the childminder's policies and are able to see the registration certificate, which is prominently displayed on the parents' noticeboard.

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 improve the procedures for recording accidents, existing injuries and the administration of medication. In addition, the childminder was asked to extend the resources for older children, effectively organise the resources for all children and to make some safety improvements.

Since the last inspection, the childminder has improved procedures for recording accidents, existing injuries and the administration of medication with the use of the National Childminding Association documentation. In addition, the childminder has extended and rearranged the existing resources to meet the needs of all the children. Various safety measures have been added, such as the extra banister rail on the stairs and the storing of sharp implements on the top of high cupboards, well out of the reach of the children. These improvements combined have a positive impact on the children's health, safety and ability to enjoy and achieve.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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):

- ensure that a current first aid certificate is maintained by completing a first aid course which includes training in first aid for infants and young children

- make the premises more welcoming to children by considering displaying examples of the children's work
- include the current address and telephone number of the regulator in the written complaints procedure.

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