

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401298
Inspection date	05 February 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 has been registered since 1988. She is registered to care for six children and is presently caring for two children on a part-time basis. She lives with her son aged 11 years. They live in a house in Harrogate and there is a park and shops within walking distance. The childminder is happy to take and collect children from school and nursery.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as they play and learn in a clean environment. Cross-infection is reduced as the childminder ensures that the children wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before eating and after going to the toilet. Good hygiene practices are followed, as the children use liquid soap and individual towels. The childminder implements thorough policies and procedures to further 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 with her current first aid certificate and first aid kit in the kitchen. All accidents are recorded and generally parents countersign these records, although the odd signature is missing.

Children benefit from eating healthy and nutritious food, such as toast and a variety of fruit, for example grapes, apple or banana for snacks. For lunch, the childminder prepares fresh food, such as cottage pie and vegetables, with fruit or yogurt for dessert, whilst babies bring their own milk. Children stay refreshed as they help themselves to drinks of water, which are always available in individual beakers on low tables.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy and develop physical skills as they regularly attend toddler groups where there is more space to move around and use large apparatus. In addition, they go for walks to local parks and walk to schools that are nearby. Young children feel emotionally secure as they are given a lot of individual attention and cuddles. Their needs are further met by the childminder recognising when they are tired and allowing them sufficient time to rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is warm and welcoming with soft child-friendly rugs and children's work, such as pictures of butterflies and Pudsey Bear displayed on the playroom walls. Children choose from a good range of toys and resources, which are stored on the floor, mainly in clear plastic crates so that children can easily access toys of their choosing. The childminder rotates the toys to maintain the children's interest and maximise their play value. The children's all-round development is nurtured as the childminder has a good range of age-appropriate equipment, such as booster steps and a highchair.

The childminder has a good awareness of potential hazards and takes positive steps to promote safety. For example, all sockets are covered, outer doors are kept locked, there are safety locks on the kitchen cupboards to prevent children accessing cleaning materials and the garden is fully enclosed by a fence and bolted gate. Children are protected in the event of fire as the childminder has a fire blanket and smoke alarms on both levels of the house. They learn to contribute to their own safety as they regularly practise the fire escape plan and follow good road safety procedures when they are out walking with the childminder.

The childminder has a range of procedures in place to promote the care and well-being of children. She does not, for instance, leave the children unattended and has a good knowledge of issues relating to child protection. Having completed a child protection course, the childminder knows exactly what to do if she has any concerns and she shares her child protection policy with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a warm and friendly relationship with the childminder, who treats them gently and is attentive to their needs. The childminder ensures that children of differing ages can access all suitable activities. At the same time, older children learn about the needs of younger children, such as their curiosity and desire to join in with the older children's play. As a result, the children are happy and settled in her care. The children are involved in a good range of

activities, which supports their all round development, such as creative artwork, baking, dressing up, feeding the ducks and visiting soft play centres. They have plenty of opportunities to develop social skills and positive relationships with their peers as they regularly attend toddler groups.

Children profit from the childminder's ability to balance her time carefully to allow them time to play and learn independently as well as giving time to support and encourage them. The childminder, for instance, spends a lot of time at the children's level, sitting on the floor, allowing them the space to explore independently, but supporting them to extend their play. When, for instance, the children start to build a tower, the childminder ensures that they have sufficient bricks and encourages them to count. Children consolidate their learning of colours, as the childminder asks them about the colours of the bricks.

There is good interaction between the children and the childminder, who responds positively to the children when they snuggle on her lap and give her a book to read. Children smile delightedly as they sing, 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' and hold hands with the childminder to do the actions. They copy the childminder, holding up their arms, showing that they are, 'so tall'. Older children become absorbed in their role play, as they sit down to 'bottle-feed their babies'. They develop independence as they fetch their shoes to put on.

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, according to the childminder's equal opportunities policy. There is a good range of toys and activities available to the children, which positively reflect diversity. For instance, the children enjoy the challenge of making jigsaw puzzles, which include people in wheelchairs and people from different cultural backgrounds. The childminder is receptive to the idea of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, though recognises that she must also consider the needs of the children she already minds. She is willing to undertake any necessary training and work with the parents and any relevant professionals involved in the children's care.

Children learn responsible behaviour through the childminder's consistent approach and basic ground rules. Children benefit from child-friendly explanations as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable, with distraction for younger children and a few minutes time out for older children. Positive behaviour is praised, which helps the children develop self-esteem. The childminder encourages the children to be kind, to share and to use good manners. As a result, the children are well behaved and helpful as they willingly help to tidy up the toys.

Parents build good relationships with the childminder. There is a mutual exchange of information at the outset when parents inform the childminder about, for instance, their children's routines and dietary requirements. In return, the childminder gives the parents details of her policies and practices, which she also explains. Parents are kept informed through regular verbal feedback and the childminder is happy to complete daily diaries for young children, depending on the wishes of the parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder, who is very well experienced, has completed the relevant childminder training and has a good knowledge of the National Standards. She keeps her first aid training up to date and is preparing for the future as she is booked onto a training course in the new Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder is well organised, with comprehensive policies and procedures in operation, which contribute to the efficient and safe management of the service. She organises her time well, managing a good range of stimulating activities that are suitable for all the children attending, these include many opportunities for physical development and socialisation.

Children's welfare is assured by the appropriate public liability insurance and the careful records and register the childminder maintains. All documents are in place and stored securely, with necessary documents, such as the register being easily accessible. Children are protected as the childminder carefully supervises them at all times and obtains thorough written parental permissions, such as to seek emergency medical treatment, to travel in the car and to apply sun cream.

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 provider was asked to make improvements to the children's attendance register.

Since the last inspection, the childminder ensures she records all details of the children's attendance in the National Childminding Association register. This promotes the safety of the children as the times of their attendance are clearly recorded.

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 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):

- ensure that all parents sign their children's accident record.

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