

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319604
Inspection date	04 February 2008
Inspector	Jane Elizabeth O'Callaghan
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1987. She lives with her husband and adult son and daughter in Otley on the outskirts of Leeds. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding 14 children, most of them part time. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. She attends the local toddler group. The family have a pet dog and two cats.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association, Leeds and Otley childminding group. She is also an Accredited member of the Leeds Childminding Network, attends extensive training and has a level 5 degree in childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder follows meticulous practices in her daily routines to ensure children's good health is promoted and the risk of cross infection minimised. For example, she wears disposable gloves when attending to their personal care, cleans the toys every week and provides individual bedding for sleep purposes, which is kept in separate storage drawers. Children are provided with individual flannels for wiping their faces, which are removed for laundering after each use, and a clean one provided. Individual hand towels are provided in the bathroom and each child has their own named peg and paper towels are provided for the older children.

The childminder gives high priority to ensuring children follow good practices in their personal care and that they fully understand the reasons behind these. For example, she ensures they wash their hands before and after meals and after using the potty or toilet, and the children delight in explaining this is to make their hands clean and get rid of germs. She continually reinforces the importance of these good practices. For example, the childminder has a poster in the bathroom explaining about washing of hands.

Children are very well cared for in the event of an accident or if they become ill. The childminder has three well stocked first aid boxes, one of which is kept in the car. She ensures that she checks the contents of these, including any expiry dates regularly. Any accidents children may have are recorded in detail in the accident book. A body diagram showing the site of the injury is also completed and parents are given a copy of the record so they can continue with any further treatment that may be necessary. The childminder has a detailed policy for the care of children who are ill and also a robust medication procedure. For example, parents are asked to complete a form asking why the child requires medication, any side effects of the medication and also for permission for the child to receive the medication and it is also signed by the childminder once administered. If children become ill whilst in the care of the childminder she makes them comfortable, contacts their parent and completes a monitoring sheet where she records their temperature, what action she has taken and the time the child was collected by the parent.

Children have excellent opportunities to enjoy fresh air and develop their physical skills. For example, daily children enjoy some kind of physical activity when they either play in the garden, which is very well resourced with equipment, such as a sand pit, balls, skipping ropes and wheeled toys, visit the local park or go for a walk in the local area. If the weather is bad and children cannot access outdoor activities the childminder provides music and movement activities indoors. The children become fully immersed in these and show a good sense of rhythm as they move their bodies in time to the music. They are also provided with a very wide range of activities to help them develop their fine motor skills, such as painting, playing with sand and manipulating malleable materials, such as dough.

Children are provided with nutritious snacks, which contribute very effectively to a healthy diet. Parents bring the children's main meals, however, the childminder does provide light teas for the children. For example, jacket potatoes, crumpets, healthy sandwiches and lots of different fresh fruit. The childminder is vigilant in finding out about children's individual dietary needs and in meeting these to ensure they remain healthy. Parents are asked to detail any requirements on the registration form and the childminder also has a list of these displayed in the kitchen. The childminder talks to the children about what food is good for them and they demonstrate

a good understanding of this. For example, they confidently relate that fruit helps them to grow strong. She also involves them in choosing fruit and vegetables when they go shopping. The childminder encourages children to try different foods and types of fruit.

Children sit at the table to eat their meals, which means they develop excellent social skills and manners. This is very evident as they spontaneously say please and thank you and ask if they can get down from the table when they have finished eating. The childminder ensures the children have plenty to drink to prevent them becoming dehydrated. For example, they have a choice of milk or water at snack, drinking water is available at all times and drinks are taken on outings and when they play outside

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe and extremely child-orientated home. For example, posters and examples of their work are displayed, which makes it a rich and stimulating learning environment, and child height furniture. Children have their own boxes and areas for their own coats. This promotes their independence very effectively and positively encourages them to have a sense of belonging.

The childminder is vigilant in ensuring children's safety. She carries out thorough risk assessments to identify and minimise any hazards both inside and outside the home and records these in detail. Daily checks are carried out before the children arrive to ensure all necessary safety precautions are in place, such as safety gates and socket covers and the premises are kept secure at all times. In addition, the identity of any visitors to the home is checked and their time of arrival and departure and the purpose of their visit recorded. The emergency evacuation procedures are displayed and the smoke detectors are checked regularly to ensure they remain in working order. A record of this is kept and also shows when the batteries are changed.

The childminder provides excellent opportunities for children to learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, they follow topics, such as 'safety when crossing the road' when they learn about how to cross roads and different areas to cross safely. She practises the emergency evacuation procedure with them regularly to ensure they fully understand what they must do in the event of a fire. The practises are all clearly recorded and include the children's responses to these and the time taken to evacuate.

The childminder has an extremely good range of toys and resources, which support the play and learning of the children very well. These are extremely well presented mostly at child height and readily available in the play rooms. All storage boxes are clearly labelled with both text and a picture to help children identify the contents and they are able to access these freely and make independent choices. The childminder adds to the resources on a regular basis and pays very good attention to purchasing items she knows the children will be interested in.

Children are well protected from possible abuse. The childminder has attended training in safeguarding children and has an extremely good understanding of the possible indicators of abuse and the referral procedures she must follow if she has any concerns. This is very evident from her detailed safeguarding children policy, a separate copy of which is made available to parents ensuring they are fully aware of her responsibilities in this area. The childminder is also vigilant in ensuring children are only released into the care of those authorised to collect them and that a record of any accidents and existing injuries is kept and shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a very positive learning environment in which children are encouraged to participate in an excellent range of purposeful activities. She has an excellent knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which she uses to meticulously plan activities, and she pays excellent attention to evaluating the activities and to recording children's responses to these. She uses her observations very effectively to keep a written record of the progress each child is making and to plan for the next steps in their learning. The children's achievements and the progress they are making is shared and discussed with parents on a regular basis.

Children are offered an excellent balance of both child-led activities and those initiated by the childminder, which enables them to learn in different ways. They have exciting opportunities to take part in planned activities linked to a different theme each month and are able to direct their own play. For example, they become captivated and fully immersed in using role play resources and their curiosity and enjoyment is clearly evident as they act out domestic situations, such as making Chinese meals with noodles and chopsticks. They persist with, and quietly take part in activities, such as jigsaws, which they complete on their own and with excellent interaction from the childminder and the other children helping and taking turns.

Children are provided with a wealth of valuable and memorable learning opportunities outside the home. For example, they recently enjoyed a visit to a museum where they learnt about their own body and the wider world. They also do a vast interesting amount of creative play. For example, children had made bread and also have their own cookery club, where older children can choose recipes to make. Children can also access an outdoor area which has an excellent variety of toys and activities. For example, slide, tent, bicycles, skipping ropes, milk crates, bats and balls.

The childminder provides younger children with valuable opportunities to explore different textures, in the extensive range of different materials in the treasure baskets. She is very skilled at asking children open-ended questions to develop their learning. For example, she encourages them to find out the different sizes that will fit in the ice cube trays. She encourages them to explore different sounds as they play with musical instruments and they have great fun as they join in with nursery rhymes and songs, which supports their communication skills very effectively. All children are extremely settled and comfortable in the childminder's care. They develop very close, trusting relationships, respond very positively to her very kind, caring manner and are making excellent progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals and the childminder meets their needs very well. She gives high priority to finding out as much as she can about each child before the placement begins. For example, she has detailed discussion with parents, encourages pre-placement visits and gathers important information on the registration form. In addition she asks parents to complete a detailed background information sheet where amongst other things they can detail their child's likes, dislikes, fears, sleep, feeding routines and any comforters. This provides the childminder with a wealth of information and shows she values parents as the child's primary carers.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very welcome to attend, and the childminder has had experience in this area. She has worked both with parents and other agencies including local schools. The childminder is fully aware of the importance to all when working closely with both them and the children to ensure everyone adapts to activities and surroundings to ensure inclusion. She also demonstrates very good practice. For example, she has attended training in managing epilepsy, autism and makaton.

Children's awareness of diversity is raised very effectively. The childminder is very conscious of the need to help children learn about other cultures and customs, and to treat people as individuals irrespective of their background. They have access to a very good range of books, dolls and jigsaws, which show positive images of diversity and they have regular opportunities to celebrate different festivals. For example, as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations they are to make dragons and cook noodles. They also have excellent opportunities to learn about their local environment and a much wider surrounding area. For example, they take a full part in the activities offered at the local toddler and childminder group each week, visit the library and various museums both locally and further afield, where they explore a variety of learning opportunities.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of managing behaviour and her written policy regarding this provides a positive and encouraging framework for children. She discusses the behaviour rules for the home with them and these are displayed for parents' information. She is also an excellent role model for them to follow. She is extremely calm and patient in her approach, shows a genuine interest in what the children have to say and treats them with the utmost respect. As a result, children know what is accepted behaviour in the setting and behave extremely well. They are fully occupied at all times, very keen to take part in the activities, readily cooperate and their manners are exemplary. For example, they use please and thank you at all times, without any prompting from the childminder.

The childminder's partnership with parents is exemplary. She keeps them fully informed of all aspects of her service by providing them with a wealth of information. For example, when the placement begins they are provided with an extremely well presented parent pack, which includes copies of all her written policies. Parents are asked to sign to say they agree with these and they are then given a copy to keep for their information. The home of the childminder is used to display a vast range of additional information, including planned activities, the weekly menu, copies of her training certificates, the evacuation procedure and information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Parents are informed when an inspection is to take place and regularly complete letters containing information of the exemplary care they and their children receive when with the childminder and these are available for inspections. Those available, show that parents value the service highly and have no concerns. For example, they state that the childminder takes great pride in what she does and that she provides a safe, caring and friendly environment with useful and important policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are very much at home and at ease in the childminder's care because she organises her days extremely well. She has established routines to ensure that the environment is safe, activities are fully prepared, and the preparation for meals and snacks is completed as far as possible before the children arrive. This enables her to give her full attention to the children,

and ensures they are able to move about freely and independently and develop their confidence to initiate their own play and learning. The childminder has a clear personal emergency plan, which includes being able to call on another registered childminder should she need help or assistance in an emergency.

Comprehensive written policies and procedures ensure the service operates extremely smoothly and efficiently and are used very effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. The childminder is very professional in her approach, is enthusiastic about her role and absolutely clear about her responsibilities when caring for children. She ensures she keeps to the conditions of her registration at all times and continually evaluates her service and strives to make improvements. For example, through attending training, reviewing and amending her policies, parent letters and working towards a full degree in childcare. Appropriate insurances are in place and clearly displayed for parents' information and all legally required documentation is in place. The register is completed as soon as children arrive and leave and each child has an individual, and extremely well organised personal file, which is stored with confidentiality in mind. High priority is given to ensuring parents are kept fully informed of all aspects of their child's care, and the activities they have been involved in. For example, the childminder completes a individual diary for each child..

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 the register includes the arrival and departure times of children's attendance. The childminder has a register which is completed daily and shows the times of arrival and departure of each individual child in her care. This ensures children are cared for in a safe environment.

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 complaint 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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