



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 317183
Inspection date 28 November 2005
Inspector Sandra Elizabeth Williams

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 was registered in 1991. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and seven years in Sedbergh. The basement, the ground floor and the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and currently has 35 children from 1 year to 13 years on roll. The childminder works with other registered childminders and assistants and the total number of children cared for at any one time is increased accordingly.

The childminder lives close to the centre of Sedbergh and is situated within walking distance of the local amenities including the school, shops and park.

The family has a pet cat.

The childminder supports children with special needs. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is currently in the process of becoming a member of the approved childminding network and is planning to provide nursery education for three and four year olds. The childminder has an NVQ level 3 qualification in Childcare and Education and is also working towards the "Quality First" award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where the childminder implements good hygiene procedures that minimise the risk to children of cross infection. Children demonstrate their developing understanding of good hygiene and personal care as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their meals and snacks. There are visual reminders for them to do this, such as posters and attractive signs on the walls. Children understand that they need to wash their hands in order to get rid of germs. The childminder follows good hygiene procedures when changing nappies as she wears disposable gloves and washes her hands afterwards.

Clear procedures are in place to meet the health needs of all children. Children's individual needs are well cared for by the use of medication records and appropriate written consents from parents. The children's health needs are enhanced as the childminder ensures that the first aid certificate is kept up-to-date as are the first aid kits.

Children develop their physical skills as they engage in activities that contribute to their good health. They enjoy regular fresh air and exercise by visiting the local park, which is well equipped with swings, slides and climbing frames, all of which enable children to develop their gross motor skills, such as balancing and climbing. They also have opportunities to play and explore in the garden where they enjoy playing on the ride-on toys, the paddling pool and tunnels.

Children are well nourished and are beginning to learn about healthy eating because the childminder encourages them to eat nutritious, fresh food, such as fruit and vegetables. Attractive posters and star charts about healthy eating are displayed on the walls reinforcing the children's learning about the importance of eating healthy foods. The childminder talks to the children about healthy foods and why they are good for them. Healthy drinks, such as water, milk and juice are readily available for the children. Children enjoy nutritious home cooked meals each day, which provide them with a good balanced diet. Planned menus are displayed on the wall for parents to see what the children are eating. Children's individual dietary needs are well met as the childminder and parents constantly strive to provide a healthy diet for the

children. Children with special dietary requirements are very well catered for and tasty alternatives are provided for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and generally safe indoor and outdoor environment. The environment is attractive and inviting to children due to the numerous displays of the children's art work, photos and colourful posters, which are all conducive to children's learning. Children are able to move about and have the ability to make choices about which room they like to play in, which helps them to develop their sense of independence.

Children benefit from a very wide range of play equipment, which is appropriate to all children regardless of their age and stage of development. Toys are safely stored in labelled boxes that are located at a low level. Children are protected from harm as the childminder ensures that the toys meet safety standards and they are cleaned on a regular basis. The children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder uses appropriate equipment to ensure that children remain safe and secure in high chairs and when travelling in vehicles.

Children are cared for in an environment where the childminder undertakes risk assessments regularly. Many new safety items have recently been put in place in order to keep children safe, such as a new gate in the back garden, a fire escape and sealed cups for hot drinks. However, some safety issues remain a concern, namely an electrical socket with a gap at the back of it, which is a hazard to children if they placed their fingers at the back of the socket. The lighting on the staircase is poor and the temperature of the water in the basement bathroom is dangerously hot.

The children understand how to keep themselves safe when on outings as they learn about the Green Cross Code and stranger danger, thus heightening their awareness of the need to be vigilant and careful.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect; she has an understanding of where to report any child protection issues. She knows who to contact if a child is at risk of harm and takes prompt action, thus protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the stimulating childminding environment where they enjoy a good standard of care and encouragement. They participate in a regular daily routine that is adapted to their individual needs.

Children benefit from the application of a written activity programme, which outlines the range of activities and learning opportunities available. The childminder uses her

knowledge of child development effectively to deliver a good selection of adult-led activities, such as baking, crafts and story reading. Children also have ample opportunity to develop confidence and curiosity through more independent exploration and play. Children's self esteem is enhanced because their achievements are valued and their art and craft work is displayed. Children enjoy a cutting and sticking activity where they choose pictures to stick onto a letter to Santa. Older children who attend during out of school hours enjoy a good variety of additional projects suited to their age range, such as making collages.

Children of all ages enjoy good access to a wide selection of appropriate toys and play materials. The childminder ensures good variety by using the local toy library. Children develop creativity and imagination using items, such as dressing up costumes and musical toys. Their cognitive skills are enhanced by the plentiful selection of puzzles and books. They also enjoy good opportunities for outdoor and physical play.

The care of babies and toddlers is enhanced because the childminder uses the Birth to three matters framework to ensure appropriate opportunities for this age range. However, the effectiveness of the framework is reduced because the care of individual children is shared between the childminders. No system is in place to provide consistent, individual monitoring of their welfare and development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the strong partnership that is fostered between the childminder and their parents. This helps them to settle well and enhances their sense of security. The childminder provides parents with a good level of accessible information. She ensures that the parents of babies receive a daily written record of their feeding, activity and sleep routine. Care arrangements for all children are regularly reviewed ensuring that their individual needs are continuously met. Parents appreciate the flexible and supportive nature of the service. However, the secure partnership with parents is compromised by the lack of confidential storage of the medicine records.

Good systems are in place for managing children's behaviour. Children learn to display good behaviour, such as appropriate manners and taking turns. They receive a good level of praise and reward for positive behaviour and careful explanation when their behaviour is not acceptable. Children develop confidence because they are valued as individuals and are encouraged to express themselves and make choices.

Children's individual needs are respected and supported well. The childminder ensures that children with special needs are included and works in cooperation with parents and other professionals to ensure their welfare and development.

Children learn to value diversity and to respect individual and cultural differences through enjoyable activities and through access to appropriate resources, such as books, dolls and jigsaws. Children develop good awareness of their local community and environment through regular outings, such as to a local play area and the Fire

Station.

Children have good opportunities to contribute and participate in activities that benefit others. They help to raise money for events, such as Children in Need and take pride in this achievement. Older children contribute to the care of the younger children by making colourful posters for them.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's highly professional approach to the service provided. Their care is enhanced by the childminder's level of training and experience and her strong commitment to ongoing personal and professional development. The childcare is also enhanced by the advice and support that the childminder receives as a member of the National Childminding Association and her participation in the 'Quality First' quality assurance scheme.

All aspects of the childminding service are underpinned by a comprehensive and thorough set of written policies and procedures. These documents have been prepared to a high standard and are regularly reviewed and revised to improve the service. They include excellent information regarding all four childminders and three assistants working together at the premises and include induction and appraisal procedures and ongoing training and development plans. A written parent evaluation survey has been undertaken and a thorough complaints policy and procedure is in place.

The childminder works with the other childminders at the premises in a positive and constructive manner, which benefits the overall care of the children. The individual childminders take overall responsibility for different aspects of the service, thus enhancing the overall efficiency of the childcare.

Children are cared for in a very well organised and homely environment. They enjoy a good amount of space for play. They are able to enjoy the excellent variety of play equipment because it is stored and displayed in an accessible manner. They also enjoy ongoing variety because the activity equipment is effectively rotated. Children benefit from the well prepared and organised activity programme, which is delivered in a flexible manner taking into account factors, such individual routines and the weather.

The childminding provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to ensure that the glass bottles were made inaccessible to children. These have been removed and this has reduced the risks to children. It was also agreed that all entries in the medication book would include the childminder's and the parent's signatures. This recommendation has been carried out, which has improved the procedure for the administration of medication to

children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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

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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):

- improve the level of safety within the home by making the electrical socket safe, improving the lighting on the stairs and ensuring that the hot water temperature in the basement bathroom is not a risk to children
- introduce a system that ensures consistency of care for babies and toddlers
- ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to medical information regarding children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk