



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303598
Inspection date	25 April 2006
Inspector	Annette Stanger

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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 4 years. She lives in a semi-detached house in Halifax, within walking distance of local parks. Most of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, with toilet facilities located on the first floor. There is a garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently minding seven children, two of whom are under 5 years, and attendance is on a full and part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to

take and collect children and attends the local parent and toddler group.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the childminder follows effective procedures and practices, which contribute to their emotional and physical well-being. She maintains good hygiene practice to prevent the spread of infection by ensuring that children become familiar with a range of healthy practices. From an early age, they learn the importance of personal hygiene, through good levels of support, timely discussions and effective daily routines. This helps them to become increasingly independent in their personal care as they attend to their own basic care needs. For example, they understand the importance of washing their hands after toileting and before meals. The childminder ensures that children are well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication meet requirements and successfully protect children.

Clear records indicate children's dietary requirements and detail any food allergies. The childminder is effective in meeting these needs in accordance with parent's wishes to protect children. Children benefit from a healthy and nutritionally balanced diet, appropriate to their individual needs. They enjoy home cooked food and fresh fruit and vegetables, which accompany their meals and snacks, essential for their well-being, healthy growth and development. They have access to frequent drinks throughout the day and mealtimes are used well to raise awareness of healthy eating, through general discussion about healthy foods.

The childminder actively encourages children to be healthy and active through good levels of support and supervision. Children take part in regular physical play both indoors and out, which promotes a healthy and active lifestyle. They make good use of local parks with fixed equipment and have access to a good range of resources both at the childminder's and local groups, which promotes their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a reasonably safe environment and the childminder minimises most risks successfully, although some risks remain. For example, a broken child proof lock has not been replaced, therefore hazardous items in the kitchen are not inaccessible and this compromises children's safety. The outdoor area, which includes the rear garden and driveway, is also not entirely safe and secure. The childminder has taken some action, looking into various possibilities of fencing to secure the area and minimise hazards, although no fencing has been erected. Instead she has employed an assistant to help her manage the outdoor

space more effectively and ensures children are closely supervised through effective deployment. She has also made children aware of the boundaries when playing in these areas, which they are able to identify; explaining that they are not allowed to go past the drainpipe. The use of the outdoor play area has also been discussed with parents and written consent has been obtained to allow their child to play in these areas under close supervision. However, there is no written risk assessment of the outdoor play area to identify such hazards and show the precautions taken to prevent accidents.

The range of toys and equipment meet safety standards and are in good repair. The indoor space is used well, allowing children to move around freely and independently, self-selecting their own play experiences. Children have a developing understanding of how to protect themselves and stay safe. The childminder regularly raises their awareness, through gentle reminders and by setting safe boundaries. For example, children are reminded of the boundaries when playing outdoors. All fire detection and safety equipment are in place and procedures for emergency evacuation are regularly discussed with the children to ensure they are able to leave the premises quickly and safely.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and is fully aware of her responsibility to protect children in line with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. This means that she can act appropriately and in the child's best interest, should she have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, settled and involved in a good range of activities that support their development. Resources are readily accessible and allow children to access opportunities independently and explore at their own pace. This builds on their natural curiosity as learners and their confidence and self-esteem. They clearly enjoy their time at the childminder's and are eager to participate in all activities. A good balance is achieved between adult and child-led experiences, and toys and equipment successfully capture children's interest. Children enjoy role play, dressing up and playing with puzzles and trains. They cooperate and negotiate well during role play and freely access further resources to support their play. For example, children get pencils and paper and make meaningful marks, such as a list of items to iron. They link sounds and letters well and enjoy identifying letters that are in their names. For example, children point to corresponding letter keys on the laptop, 'that's in my name' and then continue to spell out their names.

Good relationships are clearly evident and the children relate well to one another and the childminder. They spend their time purposefully and interaction is effective in helping children enjoy and achieve. The childminder is successful in using the Birth to three matters framework to enrich experiences for children and has also attended associated training. She uses effective questioning techniques to extend their experiences and build on what they already know. For example, she talks to children about number and asks them if they can identify different numbers on pretend

money. She also encourages children's recall, for example, as they look through books of photographs and talk about what they were doing at the time the photograph was taken. This is also evident during imaginative play when a child pretends to make some buns and the childminder asks the child if she can remember the ingredients they used when they made real buns.

Children benefit from individual routines that are consistent with experiences at home. They receive lots of warmth, care and attention to support their emotional well-being, giving them the confidence to try new experiences and acquire new skills. Children settle well in response, make good progress and are confident in their surroundings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit as the childminder treats them with equal concern, valuing and respecting their individuality. They have access to a good range of resources that reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences, which includes items borrowed from the toy library. This gives them a greater understanding and awareness of the wider world. Children settle quickly as the childminder successfully meets their differing needs and individual routines, in accordance with parent's wishes. This ensures that children are well cared for and provides continuity of care.

Children behave very well and are kind, considerate, polite and well-mannered. They share resources well and have a good understanding of right and wrong. The childminder is consistent in her approach to managing behaviour and good behaviour is valued and encouraged. Praise is given freely to children and this positive approach contributes to good levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Children benefit from the positive partnership that the childminder has with parents. They are confident and settle quickly because the childminder takes heed of the information provided. Parents receive regular verbal feedback about all aspects of their child's care to keep them well informed. This successful partnership promotes the children's well-being, care and development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder's good knowledge of child development and the fact that she attends regular training to keep herself updated. The childminding environment is welcoming and allows children to feel at home, giving them the confidence to initiate their own play and learning and independently access opportunities.

The childminder uses her time well to meet the individual needs of the children in her care, such as time to eat, rest and play. Required adult to child ratios are met and provide appropriate levels of care and supervision. This ensures that children are well

supported and contributes towards them being confident in their surroundings.

Most of the documentation is in place to promote the care and welfare of children; however attendance records are not accurate as they are not completed on a daily basis and written consent to transport children in a vehicle has not been requested from all parents.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was required to: devise and implement a policy on smoking; implement a complaints policy and method of recording; improve safety for outdoor play for all children; and obtain written consent from parents to transport children in a vehicle.

The childminder has made steady progress since the last inspection and most issues have been addressed. She has given up smoking since the last inspection and also has a written policy on smoking which is in line with the National Standards. A method of recording compliments and complaints has been introduced and to date three compliments have been received and no complaints. Some measures have been taken to improve safety for outdoor play. The childminder has looked into different possibilities of erecting fencing but instead has employed an assistant to help her manage the outdoor space more effectively and has obtained written consent from parents to allow their children to use the outdoor play area under close supervision. However, the childminder has not undertaken a risk assessment and this remains, in part, a recommendation from this inspection.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- obtain written permission from parents to transport children in a vehicle
- improve safety by ensuring all hazards are minimised effectively and complete a written risk assessment for the outdoor area, showing how children are kept safe and are unable to leave the premises unsupervised
- ensure attendance records are recorded on a daily basis.

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