



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319560
Inspection date	03 April 2006
Inspector	Linda Filewood

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 has been registered since 1991. She lives with her husband and four children aged 16, 10, 7 and 5 years old in the Chapel Allerton area of Leeds. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding five children, all on a part-time basis. The premises are within walking distance of local schools, shops and parks.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through consistent daily routines. They know to pull their sleeves up ready for hand washing before a meal. However, they are not encouraged to wash their hands before a snack and are not helped to understand that washing their hands before eating will keep them healthy. The routine for changing nappies of young children is good and ensures that everyone is protected from the spread of germs, although the risk of cross-infection when children dry their hands is not fully considered. There are adequate arrangements in place to care for children who are ill, and these are shared with parents. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and most required parental permissions and records regarding the administration of medication and recording of accidents are in place.

Children benefit from an appropriate, well-balanced variety of food which meets their individual needs and is of good nutritional value. They are encouraged to experience new foods and make healthy choices of fruit at snack time. Mealtimes are a valued part of the day and children given time to enjoy their food in a relaxed and social, family atmosphere. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the day.

Children enjoy a satisfactory range of outdoor activities which support and help to develop their physical skills. For example, they walk to school, visit the park and join other children for music and movement at a local group. Children are comfortable in their routine for rest and sleep and the childminder plans her day to allow for this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are adequately cared for in a safe indoor environment as the childminder ensures that appropriate safety precautions are in place. For instance, she risk assesses the rooms and puts safety gates in place prior to the children attending. However, children cannot play safely in the whole of the garden as potential hazards have not been removed. Children are helped to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe, particularly when out walking. They know that they must walk and not run near a road, and the childminder ensures that younger children are always securely strapped into a pushchair. Fire safety is suitably considered and the childminder has all necessary equipment and procedures in place. She carries out regular fire practices and talks to older children to raise their awareness of what to do in the event of a fire.

Space is organised effectively to allow children to independently access toys and equipment freely and safely. For example, young children confidently open the cupboard in the play area to take out a house to play with. They are encouraged to

tidy up before getting out further toys, but no clear explanation is given as to why a cluttered play space may lead to accidents. Children enjoy a wide variety of equipment which is in good, clean condition and suitable for their age and development.

Children are well-protected as the childminder has developed a clear understanding of child protection procedures. She has attended courses to improve her knowledge of child protection issues and there are effective systems in place for the safe collection of children. The childminder keeps the children safe whilst in her care by making sure that doors are kept locked and the outside gates padlocked when children play in the garden.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Relationships between the childminder and minded children are warm and caring, as a result the children are settled and at home in their environment. They respond well to the childminder and are happy in her company. Children are involved in a good range of activities which supports their all round development. Regular visits to the local play groups help the children to socialise with larger groups of children and they enjoy outings, for example, to feed the ducks in the park. They are learning to be independent through their choice of play resources and encouragement in activities, such as feeding themselves at mealtimes using child sized cutlery.

Children participate well in creative activities and enjoy taking them home to show their parents. The childminder incorporates many opportunities to talk about colours and counting in her everyday indoor and outdoor activities, contributing to developing the children's communication skills. For example, they count the number of potatoes needed at lunch time and look at the colours of cars when out walking. The childminder offers good encouragement and praise, raising their levels of self-esteem and confidence. Children enjoy books and young children are learning to hold a book the correct way up. They engage happily in age-appropriate activities and sustain an interest for short periods. The childminder offers good support to younger children to enable them to improve their concentration skills and makes good use of questions and praise to stimulate their interest in activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to gain an awareness of the wider world and can access a suitable range of activities and resources that increase their understanding of diversity. Children are encouraged to play with all the resources available and are confident at independently accessing them. They are developing an awareness of their local environment and enjoy collecting interesting items on walks.

Good behaviour is valued and encouraged, as a result the children behave well. The childminder constantly reinforces boundaries giving children clear messages of right

and wrong. Methods for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are suitable for the age and development of the child, consistent and effective. Children respond well to the childminder's clear guidance and praise, which gives them support and helps build their self-esteem. The childminder is interested in the children and what they say and do. She asks them questions to make them think and responds giving praise and encouragement.

Parents' wishes are respected ensuring that their children's individual needs are well catered for. They are informed about their child's day through daily verbal exchanges of information and a diary, with photographs, shows the child's development. New children have a flexible settling in period and information is exchanged about the child. However, the childminder has not requested written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, transporting children in a vehicle or taking children on all outings. Parents are verbally informed about the service the childminder offers and an adequate range of written policies and procedures are shown to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is warm, welcoming and organised effectively to meet the children's play and physical needs. For example, the toilet is on the ground floor and there is wheelchair access to the patio doors. Children are relaxed, comfortable with the childminder and familiar with their routines. They are suitably supervised at all times and older children given time to do their homework. The number of children in place at any one time is low, thus offering a high-level of adult support and interaction. The childminder makes effective use of local facilities and regularly arranges outings to parks as well as taking the children to play with larger groups of children. She shows commitment to extending her knowledge, enhancing the service she offers to the children and families. She has attended various courses, including the introductory course to the Birth to three matters framework, which enables her to further meet the needs of the children she cares for.

Adequate policies and procedures are in place, shared with parents and contribute to the safe management of the childminding service provided. Records are suitably documented giving parents confidence that their children are being well looked after and confidentiality is maintained at all time. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has improved the safety and security of her home by ensuring doors are locked and gates securely fastened, particularly when children are playing outside. Potential hazards, for example the storage of sharp knives, have been identified and have been made inaccessible to children, significantly enhancing their safety. Children now regularly practice the emergency evacuation procedure resulting in the fire precautions in the home being more effective.

Children are now able to access drinks freely and know they can ask for extra drinks if they need them. The childminder has attended courses on child protection that have provided her with the information and extended knowledge to enable her in taking all reasonable steps to protect the children. Written permission is now obtained from all parents before administering medication to children and all incidents are recorded, giving parents confidence that their children are being well looked after.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 good hygiene practices are put in place regarding hand washing and drying
- ensure that potential hazards in the back garden are identified and any risks to children's safety when playing out are reduced
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, transporting children in a vehicle and taking children on outings.

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