

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 401325  
**Inspection date** 18 September 2007  
**Inspector** Pauline Pinnegar

**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](http://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 1992. She lives with her partner, adult son and younger son aged 13 years. They live in a house in the Richmond area of North Yorkshire. Children use the whole of the house for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She works with her partner, who is also registered as a childminder; together they may care for additional children. At present there are eight children on roll aged from one year to nine years old, all of whom are cared for on a part time basis. Overnight care can be provided but there are currently no children on roll who require this. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and she is a member of the local childminding support group.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children thrive because their physical, nutritional and health needs are well met as a result of effective procedures and practices employed by the childminder. Children's health is well promoted as they are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained home. The childminder has effective procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. Children's understanding of the importance of good hygiene is promoted in their everyday routines. They are able to independently access toilet facilities, wash and dry their hands. They have their own clearly identifiable towel, preventing the risk of cross-infection. Brightly coloured posters are displayed in the toilet as reminders for children to wash their hands after using the toilet. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate, has a well stocked first aid box and the contents of which are checked regularly. She takes a first aid kit with her on all outings, ensuring children's well-being should an accident occur. Robust systems are in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication. Detailed, written policies are shared with parents, outlining the effective hygiene practices used by the childminder to promote children's health. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, having undertaken training in this area. She plans activities and supports children under three years of age. Children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

The childminder is well informed about children's individual dietary needs and caters very well for individual dietary requirements. She provides healthy snacks and meals and the menu is displayed for parents. She ensures children always have access to fruit and introduces many new fruits to children including pineapple, mango, avocado, coconut, and physalis. Children are offered drinks regularly. The childminder promotes healthy eating, as she talks with children about which foods are good for them and why. Children have made their own placemats covered in pictures of healthy foods. She promotes the 'five a day' ethos very well and children use activity sticker charts when they eat a portion of either fruit or vegetables. The childminder encourages children to become involved in food preparation if they are interested, for example, they make fruit salads, fruit kebabs and pizzas, choosing their own toppings.

Children enjoy activities and outings in the fresh air, which helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. The childminder encourages daily exercise, as she sometimes walks with the children to and from school and nursery and plans nature walks. Children use a range of large play equipment when they visit local groups and parks; they climb safely and have opportunities to develop their large motor skills using a range of equipment. They enjoy the soft play resources at local leisure facilities. They enjoy riding around the garden on the bikes and clambering up and down the small slide. The childminder plans suitable activities to develop their abilities and gives them confidence to try out new skills. Indoors, very young children explore using a range of equipment, such as push-along toys. As babies become more mobile and their boundaries widen, they are beginning to make choices as they explore the environment. The childminder ensures their safety as she helps them to develop their physical skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children have space to play in a homely environment where risks are minimised. The childminder takes action to ensure children are safe whilst in her care through identifying possible risks or hazards, and completes regular written risk assessments. She puts safety precautions in place,

such as socket covers, and ensures children cannot access harmful substances. Children's safety is further promoted by the childminder carrying out regular checks on toys and equipment. Doors are kept secure at all times to prevent unauthorised entry and children are well supervised, both indoors and outdoors. Appropriate safety and fire-fighting equipment is provided within the home and a written emergency evacuation procedure is in place. Regular discussion and evacuation practises on the premises give children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency. Good safety procedures are in place when taking children on outings; for instance, when out walking, emergency contact details are always taken and on occasion children wear fluorescent wrist bands. Children also explore a range of interesting topics based around keeping themselves safe, such as road and fire safety. The childminder attends 'drop in' sessions at her local childminding support group. Visitors to the group have included the local crossing patrol officer and children have visited their local fire station.

Children use a very varied range of good quality toys and equipment. Toys and equipment are age-appropriate, safe and hygienic. The regular checking of furniture, toys and equipment ensures that the children are kept very safe at all times. Effective organisation of resources allows children to begin to make choices. The space and facilities provided offer the children a welcoming environment where they feel confident and secure. Children engage in activities, which are regularly changed to maintain interest and provide stimulation.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding of her responsibilities within child protection procedures. She has accessed several training courses and has a sound knowledge of the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. She clearly explains to parents the requirement to keep a record of all accidents and existing injuries. She has confidence in her own ability to protect children and keep them safe. Her willingness to share concerns with parents ensures that the welfare of children in her care is given high priority.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, settled and relaxed in the company of the childminder. They are motivated, eager and actively participate in and enjoy the activities and experiences offered to them. Children's enjoyment and achievements at the setting are greatly promoted through the excellent documentation in place including many photographs of the children, daily diaries detailing experiences and detailed records of achievements. Children benefit through the childminder's extensive knowledge and a wealth of experience of caring for a wide range of children with differing abilities. Their individual development is successfully promoted through the childminder's use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum as reference points and for additional ideas. Children develop a huge amount of confidence and positive self-esteem through the interaction, care and attention they receive from the childminder. They are valued and treated with trust, concern and respect by the childminder. Children thrive in the relaxed and homely atmosphere. All children are welcomed and are encouraged to build relationships and gain trust in others.

Children are animated and excited when adults present take an interest and listen carefully to what they are saying and join in with them in developing their play. Access to very good resources and interaction from the childminder sustains children's interest and enables them to successfully develop their play. The childminder carefully plans a broad range of interesting activities, based on themes, which extends children's learning and enables them to learn new skills and consolidate existing ones. For example, children attend a variety of child-centred settings away from the childminding premises. These encourage the development of social

skills and also encourage the development of a range of physical skills. Planned activities include a wide range of experiences, for example, visits to the library, beach, National Trust places of interest and local nature reserves. Children regularly visit local farms where they learn about how to care for animals and they also visit the local pet shop. They plant sunflower seeds and vegetables, and water and care for the plants as they watch them grow, fostering their understanding of nature. As part of the activity children also visit the local nursery to buy plants.

Babies become engrossed in activities that interest them. For example, playing with the very interesting treasure baskets. They explore brightly coloured toys and different textures. Children gain enjoyment from the broad range of activities they take part in. These are age-appropriate and provide good levels of challenge. Good, warm and caring relationships between the childminder and the children are evident as they play contently. Very young children enjoy making music and sounds with a range of musical toys. They explore their senses with a range of natural materials. The childminder promotes children's early language and communication skills by constantly talking to children and they are beginning to echo her sounds. Resources are stored so that children can make choices in their play. The childminder plans many opportunities for exploratory play, with paint, sand, water and dough. There are plenty of opportunities for personal conversation, stories and imaginative play based on real experiences, such as role play. Children benefit from having a clear but flexible structure to their day. Older children explore early reading skills using phonics and early maths.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and have equal access to all activities and experiences offered which are stimulating and age-appropriate. Children access a good range of resources that reflect multicultural and disability issues including a comprehensive range of books and musical instruments from around the world. Children explore interesting activities related to food from different countries. They have prepared African 'bobotie', French apple tarts, German 'lebkuchen' biscuits, and guacamole. Children's natural curiosity and questions are dealt with in a sensitive and considerate manner. The childminder's written equal opportunities policy and practice ensures children's equality of opportunity. The childminder has some experience of working with children with learning disabilities and has attended a range of training courses. She ensures that all children's individual needs are known, enabling the planning and adapting of care accordingly to meet their individual needs.

Children are happy and content in their play which is seen as children play happily alongside each other, and older children chat with the adults present. Children's self-confidence is evident and is well promoted as they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from the childminder, resulting in their enjoyment and contentment. Children's behaviour is good, which is a result of the childminder's support and encouragement. Children are well behaved because the childminder is clear about the need to promote children's positive behaviour and self-esteem. The completion of a behaviour management course has enabled the childminder to develop her expertise in this area and produce a written behaviour management policy which she shares with parents and carers.

Children benefit from the effective partnerships that have developed between the childminder and parents. Children's individual needs are accommodated as discussions take place prior to the commencement of care, enabling children's needs to be fully met. Parents are provided with a wealth of information on the effective care practices used, daily routine, activities and

future events, enabling them to keep up to date with their child's care and experiences and feel included in the daily events of the setting. Photographic displays and children's individual record books show children enjoying a range of activities and experiences. The childminder actively encourages parents to share any concerns. She has a written complaints policy. However, the policy does not contain all the contact details of the regulator.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for within a well-organised and safe environment. They are happy and are at home in the setting, resulting in them being confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Children's care and welfare are significantly enhanced by the professional attitude and commitment the childminder has to her business. She is proactive in seeking training to enhance her own personal development. Children's learning is promoted as the childminder uses her knowledge of child development to effectively plan a varied and stimulating programme of activities, based on children's first-hand experiences.

Children are kept safe and their welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's appropriate implementation of required documentation. These are well organised and stored confidentially. There are effective systems in place for the sharing of information with parents about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. The childminder's certificate of registration is clearly displayed for parents. She has written and adopted a full range of user-friendly policies and procedures which she shares effectively with parents.

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 that contracts regarding business arrangements are in place with all parents. Written agreements are now maintained with all parents, ensuring children's welfare and continuity of care.

### **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):

- develop the complaints policy to include all contact details of the regulator.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)