



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317275
Inspection date	08 August 2006
Inspector	Stephen Andrew Blake
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 1996. She lives with her husband and three grown up children in their three bedroomed semi-detached home in a residential area close to Cockermouth town centre. Local resources include shops, schools, parks, play groups, doctors and churches.

The whole of the ground floor except the conservatory is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The childminder walks to local toddler and activity groups and takes children to the local park. She has a labrador dog living in the house.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in a range of activities which contribute to their good health, for example, when participating in dancing groups, using the garden or participating in a range of indoor activities. Through effective organisation, the childminder enables children to access a range of good quality and age appropriate resources that promote their physical development. Younger children participate fully in all activities because the childminder has a very good understanding of the "Birth to three matters framework". Through careful planning and recording, she implements the framework effectively and in accordance with children's individual needs.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well maintained environment. They are developing an age appropriate understanding of good hygiene through the childminder's encouragement and modelling, for example, when washing children's hands before snacks and after stroking the dog. The childminder has a good understanding of health and hygiene and implements this well, for example, through a safe and hygienic nappy changing procedure.

The childminder organises her feeding routine in accordance with the child's needs and parental wishes. Children benefit from a varied and nutritional diet because the childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating and has established effective systems to plan varied and interesting menus. She has effective procedures for the storage and preparation of food and robust systems for the recording of individual dietary needs. This helps children to stay healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a spacious home where most risks are identified and minimised, for example, through daily risk assessments and regular monitoring of toys and equipment to ensure that they are age appropriate and do not pose a hazard to children. There are some stacked bricks, wood and brambles accessible to children in the rear garden. The indoor and outdoor environment is secure and the childminder uses a good range of appropriate equipment in order to meet the needs and safeguard the safety of all children. The childminder gives a high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety outside the home, for example, in having appropriate procedures for outings and when going for local walks.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meets safety standards. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development. The childminder has established robust systems to ensure that children stay safe, for example, through a range of written procedures, appropriate supervision ratios and for the emergency evacuation of the premises. The childminder has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has a good understanding of the local Safeguarding Children's Board child protection procedures and this helps children to stay safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are able to relax and settle quickly in the childminder's home because she has created a welcoming and well organised environment. They relate well to each other and socialise with other children through regular attendance at local dancing and toddler groups and through use of nearby parks.

Children enjoy a good range of stimulating and exciting care, learning and play opportunities because the childminder plans a varied range of activities that ensure children's individual needs are met. She monitors activities to ensure they are appropriate for the age and stage of development for each child. Children listen and respond with enthusiasm as the childminder enhances their learning and play experiences with a range of good questions. They enjoy and achieve because the childminder supports children in their choice of activities and this promotes their independence and self-esteem.

Children's experiences are enhanced because the childminder draws upon her sound knowledge and understanding of the "Birth to three matters framework" and early years child development. She has established effective routines to balance periods of activity with opportunities to rest, for example, craft, construction, story time and use of the garden for climbing and sand play. The childminder is proactive in developing her knowledge and understanding of child development through participation on local training courses. This helps children to enjoy and achieve.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing their awareness of the wider world because the childminder provides a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children are learning about their local community as they participate in a good range of activities, for example, when attending local toddler groups, using parks and going for walks.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are met well as they follow their normal daily routine as discussed and recorded with their parents. The childminder has an effective partnership with parents. She has a good range of well written documents relating to children's individual activities and routines.

Children are encouraged to make themselves at home and are involved in deciding what to do. They behave well because the childminder employs sensitive and age appropriate behaviour management strategies, for example, by using positive reinforcement. The childminder has an appropriate understanding of equal opportunities and special needs; this helps children to make a positive contribution.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are at ease in the childminder's well organised environment, for example, in her well established routine, use of available space and the pre-arranged accessible resources. With careful and sensitive support, children are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Policies and procedures are well written and used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. They are shared regularly with parents to keep them well informed about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Comprehensive planning systems are monitored and adapted to keep children safe and to enable them to make good progress in all areas of their development. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has attended an appropriate early years first aid course and established a system to ensure that written parental permission is requested at the time of the placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future. This improves the safety of children in the event of a medical emergency or incident.

Complaints 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. There are no complaints to report since 1st April 2004.

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):

- ensure that hazards to children in the garden are minimised.

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