



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321662
Inspection date	11 August 2006
Inspector	Josephine Ann Northend
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 lives her two adult children in the town centre area of Hartlepool. The house is situated within easy distance of schools, shops, park, toddler groups, nursery and playgroups. The childminder has been a registered since August 1993, to care for six children under eight years. There are currently three children under eight years on roll and she also cares for children over eight years. Children attend on a full and part time basis.

All of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. The childminder collects children from a local nursery and primary school and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy physical activities that contribute to their good health. There are opportunities for children to play outdoors in the fully enclosed garden or visit local amenities. Children are able to rest and be active according to their individual needs, the childminder is very aware of the children's individual needs, for example, when they need to sleep she ensures they have their comforter.

The childminder supports children's hygiene well. They each have their own towels and they wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. The childminder uses a book to teach the children why they need to wash their hands. This ensures they learn about good hygiene. Good procedures are in place regarding sick children and administration of medication. Consent has been requested from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. Accident and medication records are all signed by parents to acknowledge the entry and the childminder has an appropriate first aid certificate. This means children's health needs are met well.

Drinks are freely available to children during the day. They are offered varied, nutritional food at mealtimes and they receive a healthy diet. These comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean home where most risks are identified and minimised. This means that they are able to move around independently. However, the glass in the outside play house is not safe. This poses a hazard to the children. There are clear arrangements in place to keep children safe in the event of a fire. Appropriate fire safety equipment and emergency evacuation procedures are in place.

A range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys, which are in a safe, well-maintained condition are provided to promote children's development and welfare. A range of toys are stored well at child level, this means children can access them independently to direct their own play.

Children are protected by the childminder who has a satisfactory understanding of child protection policies and procedures and holds a current first aid certificate.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Warm relationships have been developed between the childminder and the children, which increases children's sense of trust and this helps them to develop a good sense of self. Children's communication skills are developing well as a result of the childminder talking and listening to them.

Children use a good range of toys and equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The toys are organised to encourage independent access, however, children rarely select from them independently. The childminder has a good understanding of child development. This means children's personal, social and intellectual development is supported well.

The childminder provides a varied and interesting range of activities which contribute to children's development. For example, books and role play. The childminder is interested in what children do and say, and she is very involved in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn about the wider world through activities and resources and the childminder acts as a positive role model. They are beginning to learn about the local community as they go for walks to the local park.

The childminders good understanding of each child's needs is used to encourage some sense of security and belonging. She uses positive strategies for managing behaviour by giving children praise and encouragement for their achievements. This helps the children to understand the boundaries set and to behave well.

Children benefit from the close partnership that the childminder has developed with their parents. Parents' views about their children's needs are sought before the child starts. Contracts are in place and parents are kept verbally informed about their child's day and activities. This enables the childminder to meet each child's needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are settled with the childminder and in the environment. This means that they are happy in their play. Space is used appropriately to cater for the children's play needs. They are able to move around confidently. Adult to child ratios are maintained and the childminder organises her time well to meet the individual needs of the children. The childminder has completed relevant training courses, including advanced 'Birth to three matters' training. This has increased her knowledge and skills and allowed her to develop her practice.

Policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure they are informed about the service and their child's activities. Verbal information is shared daily. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Records are generally well maintained and organised, however recent accident recordings could not be located. This does not fully safeguard children's welfare.

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 obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and for transporting children in a vehicle. Both of these consents are now in place. This protects children's welfare.

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

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 all required records are available for inspection
- ensure the low level glass outside is safe or inaccessible to children.

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