



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY331458
Inspection date	12 September 2006
Inspector	Noreen Elizabeth Appleby
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 was registered in 2006. She lives with her husband and their three children, aged four years, eight years and 11 years, in a house in Annfield Plain, approximately two miles from Stanley town centre. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the local area, as well as parks, shops and local amenities.

All ground floor rooms are used for childminding purposes. Toilet and hand washing facilities are on the first floor. Minded children do not access any other first floor rooms. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently minding four children, aged between nine months and seven years, as well as one child over eight years of age. All children attend on a part-time basis. She takes children to, and collects them from, the local school. She also takes younger children to local toddler groups.

The childminder maintains informal links with other local childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable home. They are learning the importance of personal hygiene through everyday routines, such as washing their hands after using the toilet, or before meals and snacks. The childminder ensures babies and young children use wipes or individual facecloths. However, older children share the use of family towels, so their health is potentially compromised by the risk of cross-infection. The childminder helps children learn about personal hygiene issues. For example, they attended a health promotion which helped them to learn the importance of brushing their teeth. Suitable nappy-changing facilities are available, although present procedures do not effectively protect children from the risk of cross-infection. Sound plans are in place for children who become ill or have an accident. Suitable first aid arrangements meet regulatory requirements and ensure children are adequately cared for. Children's medication needs are fully discussed with parents and appropriately recorded, including formal parental consents.

Children enjoy regular outdoor activities that contribute to their good health. For example, they regularly walk to school or go to the park, enabling them to get plenty of fresh air. They also have opportunities to explore large equipment and ride-on toys. As a result, they are developing physical skills and coordination. Children are able to rest or be active, according to their individual needs.

Children's catering needs are fully discussed with parents. The childminder ensures children have regular drinks to keep them sufficiently hydrated throughout the day. If parents provide foodstuffs, perishable items are suitably refrigerated and appropriately reheated. Children enjoy a nutritionally balanced diet, including fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder limits the amount of processed foods and additives, to ensure children are well nourished. Children sit together to eat. Younger children are learning to feed themselves and all children are learning good table manners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-organised, safe environment where they have sufficient room to move around freely and safely. Premises are comfortable, warm and welcoming, providing a friendly setting for children and parents. The childminder ensures that furniture, toys and equipment are maintained in a clean, safe condition, thereby promoting children's welfare. Resources are invitingly set out within children's reach. As a result, children enjoy exploring their environment and are developing confidence and independence through being able to make personal choices.

The childminder takes suitable steps to protect children from potential hazards, both in her home and on outings. For example, she uses appropriate safety equipment, such as safety gates

and socket covers. She has identified a clear evacuation route and uses stories and discussion to raise children's awareness of what to do in an emergency. Children are also learning other appropriate methods for keeping themselves safe. They are encouraged to walk around carefully indoors and they practise suitable road safety drills when walking out-of-doors. Babies and toddlers are suitably strapped into their buggies or high chairs and all children use appropriate car seats and restraints.

The childminder demonstrates a sound understanding of her responsibilities regarding child protection issues. She has suitable plans in place to report any concerns promptly in order to protect children from harm. However, present information held is out-of-date, so it does not consistently ensure compliance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures or ensure child protection issues are reported effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's care arrangements are thoroughly discussed and agreed with parents. Children benefit from regular daily routines that take good account of their needs, such as rests, feeds, outings and school runs. Children are forming positive relationships with the childminder and with peers. The childminder interacts well with them, giving them encouragement, support, comfort and reassurance, enabling them to feel happy and secure.

A good range of activities and resources helps children to learn new skills across all areas of their development, as well as providing interest and enjoyment. Babies and toddlers are becoming more mobile as they explore their environment. They enjoy tactile hand-held toys, musical resources, small world equipment and looking at picture books with the childminder. Older children particularly enjoy art and craft activities, such as painting or collage, or occasional baking activities. Children also benefit from regular outings, for example, to toddler group, the library or the park. All children are gaining confidence and high self-esteem, as a result of the childminder providing good encouragement and praise. She plays alongside the children, supporting them well to enhance and extend their learning and enjoyment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder knows the children well. She values and respects them as individuals, thereby helping to give them a sense of belonging. Children are learning about the wider world and diversity. For example, they handle resources, such as ethnic dolls and books, as well as seeing positive images on children's educational television programmes. They are developing a sound sense of community as they take part in outings to toddler groups, the park or the library.

The childminder uses positive strategies for managing children's behaviour, such as clear speech and body language whilst sensitively reinforcing appropriate boundaries. As a result, children are learning to share, take turns and to take responsibility for their own actions. They generally behave well.

The childminder has developed sound working relationships with parents, which helps her to understand children's needs. She works closely with them, sharing information through formal contracts and agreements, as well as completing daily diaries for young children. Children's care and progress are also discussed with parents at the beginning and end of each day, to ensure children's on-going needs are competently met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled as a result of regular routines and a well organised environment. The childminder is suitably experienced and has completed mandatory training. She demonstrates a sound understanding of the National Standards and has a positive attitude and commitment to her role. Suitable adult-to-child ratios ensure children are supported well. All children are happy and settled and their care, learning and play experiences are effectively met.

Children's personal information and other mandatory records, which are required for the safe and effective management of the provision, are adequately maintained. However, some information is out-of-date and systems are not effectively organised to ensure all relevant information is readily accessible. The childminder is aware of the need to notify Ofsted of significant changes to her registration.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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 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 nappy-changing arrangements and hand-drying arrangements minimise the risk of cross-infection
- ensure child protection arrangements comply with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures
- improve documentation systems by ensuring information is up-to-date and well organised, in line with National Standards.

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