



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291887
Inspection date	08 August 2006
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.

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 outstanding. 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 August 2004. She lives with her husband and son aged seven years. The property is situated in a residential area of Hartlepool. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, plus one bedroom and the bathroom on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children at any one time and is currently minding 12 children under eight years and one child over eight years, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for one child but there are currently no children on roll receiving overnight care. The childminder regularly works with another childminder.

The childminder is a member of the Children Come First Network and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder positively promotes children's health by actively encouraging healthy eating. Children are helped to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. The childminder plans menus using the 'five a day' information packs. Children are actively involved in food preparation such as chopping fruit and vegetables. The childminder has prepared wipe clean menu cards for older children to use in role play and for use as they help prepare a wealth of foods from around the world. For example, Argentinean Fritters, German Berlin Cakes, Haitian Avocado Salad with Pineapple. Children explore fun and interesting activities relating to healthy eating topics and receive certificates if they have eaten five portions of fruit or vegetables. Mealtimes are very relaxed, social occasions when children sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Children are given healthy meals which are appealing and appetising. Children thoroughly enjoy a range of fruit at snack times. Menus are produced to give parents information about meal choices. The childminder is very aware of each child's individual dietary needs and ensures these are met. Any special dietary requirements are discussed extensively with parents and are catered for very well. She offers regular drinks so that children do not become dehydrated.

Children clearly thrive because the childminder follows highly effective and robust procedures and practices. These meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. For example, children are consistently protected from cross-infection as they have individual towels and toothbrushes. The childminder takes further steps to prevent the spread of infection by keeping the premises very clean and wearing gloves when nappy changing. Children receive a very high standard of care and are kept comfortable when they are taken ill or have an accident as the childminder follows current guidelines for first aid and administering medication. She holds relevant well written policies and procedures which she effectively puts into practice.

Children make very good progress in their physical development. The childminder provides an abundance of opportunities for physical play through very well planned activities. This helps children develop confidence to enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in various ways. Children enjoy plenty of robust activities, such as using the trampoline in the garden, riding bikes or scooters, swimming and football. Yoga is also a feature of the setting. All children dance and move to music and younger children access soft play facilities within the community. Children also use a range of equipment as they take part in their own 'sports day'. All these activities contribute to helping children to understand how exercise helps them to stay healthy.

Children are beginning to repeat a wide range of movements through learning action songs and rhymes with the childminder. The Birth to three matters framework is used as reference to provide suitable and stimulating physical play opportunities for children to enable them to grow and develop.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an environment where their safety is given a high priority as the childminder completes regular risk assessments, identifying possible risks or hazards and actively takes prompt action. This ensures children are cared for in a very safe, secure and supportive environment. Identified hazards are dealt with promptly and effectively. The outdoor play space has been designed to be child friendly and very safe. The childminder gently reminds very young children to be careful when playing on the trampoline. She liaises closely with parents and carers discussing children's individual needs in terms of their safety, allowing them optimal challenge to develop new skills. The use of suitable safety equipment, such as safety gates, to prevent accidents ensures children's safety and well-being is promoted. The childminder conducts daily checks of both indoor and outdoor play space prior to the children's arrival, which significantly enhances their safety. High priority is given to close supervision at all times and particularly when using the garden with an adult being present at all times. Regular discussion and evacuation practise of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency. Excellent safety procedures are in place when taking children on outings. When out walking children wear bright tabards or yellow tops so they can be clearly identified. Children wear safety helmets when riding their bikes. All emergency contact details are always taken on outings. Children also explore a range of interesting topics based around keeping themselves safe such as road safety, safe use of equipment and spotting hazards in the home.

Children use an extensive range of high quality toys and equipment. They confidently select toys from the range set out for them, from low shelving and from those offered to them by the childminder. The extensive range of 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.

The childminder has a very good understanding of how to protect children, and recognises this is her first priority. She has attended a number of training courses related to child protection. In this way she has ensured that her practice is underpinned by a good up-to-date knowledge of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and also the correct procedures to follow should she have any concerns. She has an excellent written statement about child protection and she makes sure that this is discussed with parents. This actively contributes to children's safety and well-being.

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 are extremely confident and self assured because of the excellent support and encouragement they receive from the childminder, for example, as they are involved in an abundance of art and craft activities, excitingly showing their contributions to all adults. Children are confident and relate very well to each other cooperating well as they take turns playing snooker. The childminder is enthusiastic and experienced; she uses her wealth of experience

to plan an extensive range of opportunities and activities, which are organised around particular themes of interest. Older children have well planned opportunities to learn and develop specific pre-school skills through the childminder's clear understanding of the Foundation Stage.

Younger children benefit from the childminder's excellent understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and experience a wealth of play experiences. They investigate and imitate using the telephone and create and experiment with their own symbols and mark making. Children develop confidence and creativity as they build with Lego. Children enjoy books and stories and have developed their own story sacks with the childminder.

The childminder skilfully plans activities, provides time for free play and knows the learning outcomes for the children well. She instinctively knows when to support them in their play and when to stand back. Children are beginning to learn to use their imagination well, try out new things and are effectively challenged in their learning. They are growing in confidence because the childminder gives them time and encouragement to develop new skills. Children are very relaxed and settled. This enables them to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The childminder values children and helps them to feel good about themselves by providing very positive support. She constantly praises children and as a result children behave very well.

Children have opportunities to explore living things in the garden. During a recent topic they worked in the garden digging out weeds and planted seeds and worked with a variety of gardening tools. Art and craft is a strong feature of the setting. Children have completed collage pictures using seeds and natural materials and made plasticine worms. Children also enjoyed a visit to a local nursery to investigate and buy bedding plants for the garden. The childminder plans lots of exciting and interesting outings for children including trips to farms, leisure centres, the seaside and a 'teddy bears picnic'. Younger children enjoy activities such as 'baby football', the paddle pool and exploring the bubble making machine. All children have access to very good resources and interaction from the childminder sustains their interest and enables them to successfully develop their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly respected and valued by the childminder. They benefit from the childminder knowing them well and responding to their individual needs and personalities during the day. Children's differing stages of development are accommodated as the childminder skilfully adapts activities and uses developmentally appropriate equipment to enable each child to participate fully in activities and to successfully develop their independence. There is a wide range of resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. Children learn to appreciate and respect others' similarities and differences through an excellent range of planned topics and activities, for example, Chinese New Year celebrations, when children ate Chinese food and enjoyed varied craft activities including writing in Chinese. Children have also learnt to write in Braille and have learnt Islamic greetings. They have learnt how to wrap a sari and made Mkeka mats. The childminder has developed her skills in working with children who have special needs and has updated her knowledge by completing training workshops related

to equal opportunities, diversity and autism. She is able to liaise closely with parents and other agencies to ensure the needs of the child are met within the setting.

Children are happy and well behaved. The childminder uses positive strategies, which are appropriate to each child's age and level of understanding, to manage children's behaviour. She has incorporated a behaviour management statement into the information she provides for parents, ensuring they are fully aware of the strategies, thereby encouraging consistency. Children are involved in the setting of 'ground rules' helping them to manage their own behaviour through the establishment of clear boundaries. They are encouraged to share, take turns and play cooperatively through the childminder's good example. Children are spoken to in a polite, positive manner and thrive on the praise and encouragement they receive. The completion of a behaviour management course has enabled the childminder to develop her expertise in this area.

The childminder's excellent understanding of the Birth to three matters framework enables her to plan activities and the minded children's day. Children are given good opportunities to develop their confidence and sense of belonging through very good encouragement, support and interaction.

Children benefit greatly from the excellent partnership with parents and carers. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully and in detail with parents and carers prior to placement and on an on-going basis as they develop new skills and achieve milestones in their development. Successful relationships with parents and carers support the children's development very well. Letters of support from parents and carers were seen during the inspection. These were extremely positive about the care the childminder provides for their children. Feedback on children's development and general well-being is given on a regular basis in an informal, verbal way on a daily basis and in written form by means of a daily diary for children under two years. Parents and carers have access to information on what the childminder has to offer, and their child's records. They also receive a complimentary 'welcome pack' and copies of the childminder's policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder has developed an extremely well organised setting including the playroom which appeals to children. It provides a wealth of exciting learning opportunities which are easily accessible. An excellent range of resources are available which inspire children's imagination and encourage them to learn in a fun way. Evaluations of practice against the outcomes for children both individually and as a group ensures children are extremely well cared for. The childminder is very clear about her role and responsibility in providing a high quality service to the children and their family. The childminder has undertaken appropriate training to enhance her existing meticulous practice and enthusiastic knowledge, enabling her to provide high quality childcare.

Checks have been completed to ensure that persons living in the household and the co-childminder are suitable. Personal information regarding the children and their families is filed securely to ensure confidentiality. Parents are made aware of the documents and records

held prior to the commencement of care. They may have access to any records relating to their child and frequently contribute comments or information in the child's diary or record book. Observations relating to the child's minded day, development and general well-being are fed back to parents and carers informally as they collect their children at the end of their minded day. Children benefit from the excellent communication between the childminder, parents and carers. The required record keeping is maintained to a consistently high standard and as a result children's health, welfare and development are promoted successfully.

Overall the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to consider the potential hazard of the accessible wire to a minded child if in the cot. There are now no potential hazards accessible to any child throughout the premises ensuring children's safety.

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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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