



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY296545
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 November 2004 and has one daughter aged 20 months old. She operates from a house situated in a residential area of Hartlepool. The whole of the ground floor of the 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 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.

Children clearly thrive because the childminder follows highly effective and robust procedures and practices. These meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Children are kept safe from illness and cross infection because the childminder has excellent routines in place to maintain their health and well-being. Children with individual health requirements have these met very well because the childminder ensures she is well informed to meet their needs. Children are developing high levels of independence in managing their personal hygiene because the childminder ensures they are supported well; for instance, ensuring that water and towels are easily accessible for children to wash their hands. Children are consistently protected from cross-infection as they have individual towels and toothbrushes provided on a daily basis. The childminder takes further steps to prevent the spread of infection by keeping the premises very clean and wearing gloves when changing nappies. 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 enthusiastically explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences, such as, playing on the wheeled toys, gardening with appropriate tools. The children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as part of their daily routine. They take pleasure in a versatile range of activities and outdoor games such as the trampoline, which they tackle enthusiastically. 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. Younger 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.

Children benefit from a healthy, varied and nutritious diet. They enjoy lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and healthy snacks. All meals and snacks take account of the children's individual needs. Children are asked if they would like a snack and are able to choose from a variety of fruits, which are cut up into small or large pieces, dependent on children's preference. Children benefit from the childminder's increased knowledge and training on healthy eating, 'healthy child' and food hygiene. 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. Any food provided by parents is stored and prepared appropriately. Mealtimes are seen as a sociable time where children eat together, chatting and laughing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Risks of accidental injury to children is skilfully minimised, because the childminder is extremely vigilant and uses thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. 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, this 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. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, for example, through the use of fluorescent safety bibs and brightly coloured tops bearing the childminders logo, which allows children freedom whilst on outings, but also keeping them safe. The childminder works exceptionally hard to introduce children to safety issues. Children 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. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect them from harm. Regular discussion and evacuation practise of the premises gives children a clear understanding of the importance of staying safe in an emergency.

Children use a wide variety of good quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is regularly monitored to ensure it is safe, well maintained and appropriate. Toys and resources are replaced, updated and added to, when necessary. Resources are organised on a daily basis, dependent on those that are safe for those children attending.

Children are expertly protected by the childminder who has a very clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures, due to training and expert advice from her co-childminder. She gives top priority to children's welfare. 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 thoroughly enjoy their time in the childminder's home. They achieve extremely well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her exceptional understanding of early years guidance, such as, "Birth to three matters" and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide high quality care and education to the children in her care. Children gain immense enjoyment from the excellent range of activities they take part in. These are age appropriate and provide good levels of challenge. They benefit from regular outings and excursions, enjoying features of the local community; such as, the park and trips to the shops, and also from opportunities to socialise with larger groups, at leisure facilities. Activities within the childminders home are diverse and interesting. Older children have an involvement in planning their day and this means that they are very enthusiastic and become totally engrossed in what they do. They develop good levels of confidence through being able to make choices about how they spend their time. 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.

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.

Right from the start, the childminder finds out about children's skills, interests and needs and builds on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. She is very sensitive to the needs of the children. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult-led and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. The childminder is perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and uses questions very successfully to challenge children's thinking and language skills. She uses highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements in their development files, and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

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 range of resources, and interaction from the childminder sustains children's interest and enables them to successfully develop their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are cared for by the childminder who works with parents to meet children's individual needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children are valued and respected as individuals and the childminder's aim is that 'all children feel welcome, happy and valued in my care'. She strives to help children reach their potential and meet their needs, including any cultural or special needs. Children's individual routines are adhered to and any changes discussed with parents. Children are actively encouraged to help tidy up, take turns, help and care for each other. Children have access to a wide variety of good quality resources that reflect diversity such as puzzles, books, instruments and dolls from different countries. 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 Islamic greetings. They have also learnt how to wrap a sari and made Mkeka mats.

Children behave extremely well and play together harmoniously, in a very calm and settled environment. They learn by having a positive role model and understand the clear and consistent boundaries. Children are given explanations as to why some behaviour is unacceptable. Positive behaviour is promoted extremely well with very good use of ongoing praise and encouragement. This results in children who are confident and secure, and who enthusiastically participate in activities. The 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.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that their individual children's needs are met and gives them good daily information about their children's activities and routines. She provides very high quality information about the setting so that parents feel well informed and secure about the environment in which their child is cared for. She develops excellent relationships with parents and invites feedback from them in order to provide the best care experience for their children. Parents are very well informed about the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals. They are kept fully involved with their children's learning and development.

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

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is very well organised, arranging space and resources to maximise care, learning, and play opportunities for children. Children are happy and settled in a calm and well-organised environment. They move around safely, with independence and effective supervision. Children can easily access many of the toys and resources and the home is ready for the children, as they arrive each morning. The childminder shows an extremely professional approach to her practice, as demonstrated by her commitment to training and to developing her skills and she works well with her co-childminder. Children benefit from her excellent knowledge and understanding of children's developmental stages. For instance, she has attended training in the "Birth to three matters" framework, and her dynamic implementation of this in monitoring the progress of very young children ensures they benefit from activities that support their individual development very well.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the excellent organisation. Children benefit from a highly skilled childminder who has a high regard for the well-being of all children. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play with both the childminder and her co-childminder present at all times. This is to ensure all children receive sufficient care and attention. Children are happy and settled in a calm and well-organised environment. They move around safely, with independence and very effective supervision and support.

All required documentation is in place and regularly reviewed, which contributes to children's health, safety and well being. Each child has his or her own file where all the necessary information is kept. 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.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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