



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321657
Inspection date	07 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 has been a registered childminder since July 1995. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 15 and 18 years old in the Throston Grange area of Hartlepool. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding seven children. Four children are aged under five years and three children are aged over five years. Most children attend on part time schedules.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association, local Hartlepool Network group, and the local childminding support group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is very well promoted as they are cared for in a warm, clean and well maintained home. The childminder displays excellent hygiene practices and has effective procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. Children therefore gain a good understanding of the importance of personal hygiene as they follow established daily routines, for example, washing their hands before and after eating. Older children independently access toilet facilities, where they wash and dry their hands. Children have their own, clearly identifiable towel, preventing the risk of cross infection, and the childminder follows clear nappy changing routines. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate. She has a well stocked first aid box, the contents of which are checked regularly. She takes a first aid kit with her on all outings, ensuring children's well-being should an accident occur. Robust systems are in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication. Detailed written policies are shared with parents, outlining the effective hygiene practices used by the childminder to promote children's health.

Children benefit from an extensive range of activities which promote their physical development and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy playing in the childminder's garden where they can run freely, manoeuvre wheeled toys, or use basket balls, hoops and skate boards. Outings to the beach, and indoor play centres encourage children to develop a positive attitude to exercise. The childminder also takes children on walks to the local Marina and regularly uses the local parks where children play football and develop their gross motor skills on the climbing apparatus. Babies and toddlers benefit from well organised, safe space in which they practise and become skilful in a range of movements. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and daily routines. Young children can sleep comfortably, without disturbance, in either a travel cot or pushchair, promoting their well-being.

Children's growth and development is effectively promoted as the childminder offers appetising meals and snacks. Children choose from a range of fruits for snacks and are introduced to new tastes such as mangos. They develop a valuable awareness of healthy eating as the childminder talks about healthy foods with the children and displays posters depicting fruit and vegetables and have explored healthy eating topics making collage pictures of their favourite fruit. Children are introduced to a wide variety of foods through topics planned by the childminder, for example, they ate Chinese food during Chinese New Year. Dietary requirements are fully discussed with parents prior to the commencement of care to ensure that no child is put at risk from a reaction to food. Children are able to take responsibility for their own drinking needs as their own flasks of drink are easily accessible to them throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are meticulously safeguarded through the childminder's paramount concern and excellent practice. Indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively creating a child-friendly environment which enables children to explore and take risks while being appropriately supervised. Children's welfare is additionally promoted through the childminder's extensive

knowledge and pro-active skills with regard to their safety. For example, risk assessments are carried out to identify hazards with regard to use of equipment, spaces within the house, considerations for outings and use of transport. Appropriate safety equipment is used according to the age and the needs of the children attending. Thorough procedures are in place to ensure children are safe when on outings. The childminder takes appropriate information with her including parents contact numbers for emergencies. Children use a very good range of toys and equipment. All are good quality and meet safety standards. Children access resources independently. Equipment is clean and in a good state of repair. Babies and young children sleep safely and comfortably and are frequently monitored.

Children learn about their own and others safety through following the excellent practice of the childminder who is an exceptional role model. Children are involved in regular and recorded fire drills and fire safety discussions. Further activities involve children using activity word search sheets to raise awareness of fire safety. Children are also actively involved in drawing up the emergency escape plan. Road safety has also been explored by children through fun activities in the home, and discussion when out walking.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded as the childminder has a precise understanding of local child protection guidelines and procedures. She has attended relevant training to update her knowledge and has a written policy on child protection which she shares with parents in order to protect children. Children's welfare is further promoted as the childminder has thought about what steps to take in the event of a serious accident.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a calm environment where children are happy and confident. Children enjoy themselves and are helped to achieve. Good, warm and caring relationships between the childminder and the children are evident as they laugh and giggle and play contently and co-operatively. Children communicate easily with each other. Older children involve the younger children in role play in the play house, using their imagination pretending to be 'babies'.

Children enjoy a wealth of stimulating and practical activities. They enjoy using the chunky chalks as they create a seaside scene on large paper in the garden. They are keen to participate in all activities and join in very enthusiastically with their favourite stories such as 'The Gruffalo'. They also become very animated as they use the story sacks when acting out 'The old lady who swallowed a fly'. Children also explore planting seeds and making 'bottle gardens'.

Children are valued and the childminder helps them to feel very good about themselves by frequently providing positive support, praise and encouragement, this helps build children self esteem. Children's work is valued and their art work is displayed attractively with the recent self portraits in pride of place.

Children also benefit from an extensive range of activities outside the home. The childminder plans these activities very well, and uses them effectively as opportunities to help children's learning. During the school holidays older children choose which outings they wish to take part in. Recently children have taken part in a visit from 'Zoo lab' at the library, visited the museum to

explore puppetry making their own puppets and woolly bugs, made cameras and passports. Children also enjoyed very recently a trip to Tweddles Farm where they enjoyed feeding the animals. One child reported the 'goat even ate the bag'. Each child has a disposable camera for use during the holidays to take photographs of their activities and have begun to make their own scrap book documenting all the fun events.

Clear planning is in place for all age groups which is displayed for parents information. The childminder follows the Birth to three matters framework for children under three years. The childminder has begun to develop files for each child containing examples of activities, identifying links with relevant aspects of the framework and accompanied by photographs. She also completes detailed assessments of children's achievements to enable her to plan carefully for the next steps in each child's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are welcomed and have equal access to all activities and experiences offered which are stimulating and age appropriate. Children play cooperatively together sharing and taking turns with activities and equipment and develop an understanding of others and 'differences'. Children access an extensive range of resources that reflect multicultural and disability issues including a range of musical instruments from around the world. They have explored festivals such as Divali when they made hard clay lamps. Children have also explored flags from different countries around the world. Children's understanding of others is encouraged through well planned themes and spontaneous activities. Children's natural curiosity and questions are dealt with in a sensitive and considerate manner. The childminder's written equal opportunities policy and practice ensures children's equality of opportunity. The childminder has some experience of working with children with learning disabilities and has attended several disability awareness course. She ensures that all children's individual needs are known, enabling the planning and adapting of care accordingly to meet their individual needs.

Children are very happy and content in their play which is seen as children play happily together and chat with one another, the childminder and inspector. Children's self-confidence is evident and is very well promoted as they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement from the childminder resulting in their enjoyment and contentment. Children's behaviour is excellent, which is a result of the childminder's support and encouragement. Children are very well behaved because the childminder is clear about the need to promote children's positive behaviour and self-esteem. The completion of a behaviour management course has enabled the childminder to develop her expertise in this area and produce a written behaviour management policy which she shares with parents and carers.

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.

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 and written observations of development. Parents and carers have access to information on what the childminder has to offer, information about Ofsted and records. A parents notice board is available in the hall way of the home and displays all relevant information regarding both care and activities. Parents also have individual folders containing the childminder's policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enriched by the childminder's enthusiasm, her highly effective organisation of time, space and resources and her committed approach. Children access toys, equipment and activities which are well planned and prepared prior to the children arriving enabling children to feel welcome, confident and happy. Children confidently access and are involved in a range of interesting and age appropriate activities both within and away from the childminding setting. Consistent routines and effective support ensure children feel a sense of belonging and are part of a bigger family. The childminder is highly motivated and actively seeks and attends regular training opportunities. This ensures she is well informed and able to implement new ideas and childcare practices within the childminding setting.

Children benefit from the childminder's sound and secure knowledge of child development and of her legal responsibilities. All required documentation is in place and regularly reviewed, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. The high quality policies and procedures are shared with parents, which means they clearly know about the provision and the care their child receives. Children's individual needs and requirements are well known and discussed with parents and carers prior to their child starting ensuring their individual needs are well addressed and provided for. Children's safety and enjoyment is given a high priority as the childminder obtains parental consent for several aspects of her care. 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 day. The childminder also completes a daily diary and observations for babies and the very young children which she shares parents. Children benefit from the excellent communication between the childminder, parents and carers.

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; ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice; ensure register records accurate times of arrival and departure.

All records are now maintained accurately including the attendance register which supports children overall safety and welfare. Children now have access to a full range of activities and resources which raise their awareness of diversity.

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