



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336204
Inspection date	09 January 2007
Inspector	Ann Coggin

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 has been registered since June 2006. She lives with her husband in the town centre area of Hartlepool within walking distance of local primary schools, parks and shops. The ground floor and the upstairs bathroom and study are used for childminding activities. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The family have a dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and there are currently four children on roll aged from three years to eight years old. The childminder attends local toddler groups on a regular basis, and collects children from her local school.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are gaining an awareness of good hygiene practices because the childminder consistently reminds them about the need to wash hands and to use their own towels to keep them healthy. Their ability to gain independence at hygiene routines is well supported through suitable equipment, such as liquid soap and steps to help children reach the toilet and sink comfortably.

Children's individual dietary needs are met by healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Well planned menus offer children a balanced range of different foods which are presented attractively and include colourful fruit and vegetables. Drinks are made available to children throughout the day. Mealtimes are social occasions when children sit with the childminder around the table and enjoy their food. The childminder ensures allergies and other special dietary requirements are discussed with parents so that children's individual needs are always met.

Children's health is well maintained through good policies and procedures, which are written and shared with parents appropriately. This helps protect children's good health as children who are ill do not attend. She has permissions and records in place for the administration of medication to children and to seek emergency treatment. Children's welfare and well being are further protected because the childminder holds a current first aid certificate, ensuring she can promptly administer first aid in the event of an accident.

Children take part in regular physical play both indoors and outside. They have easy access to the secure outdoor area where they enjoy riding bikes and playing with a selection of toys. Children enjoy regular walks to the local parks with swings and climbing equipment. They are also taken to parent and toddler groups where they can run around, use soft play equipment and have fun.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder organises space and resources well to reduce hazards and actively encourages independence. The home is safe and child friendly. There are written policies and procedures in place ensuring that risk of accidental injury to children is minimised, and the childminder places a high priority on children's safety. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, such as socket covers and safety gates. Furniture has been placed to enable children to move around safely and freely. Children use a broad range of good quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards.

Children use the whole of the downstairs freely and older children visit the toilet independently. Their awareness of risk and safety is raised as they are reminded to hold onto the handrail when coming down the stairs and to hold hands or hold onto the pushchair when they are out walking. The childminder talks to children about road safety and not wandering off and talking to strangers. There are clear procedures in place when taking children on outings to ensure their

safety. For example, she carries a mobile phone, portable first aid kit and has photographs of the children with contact numbers on the back and a card stating she is a registered childminder.

There is a clear lost children procedure in place. The childminder has devised and practiced a plan to enable her to evacuate the building in an emergency and a fire blanket is accessible.

Children are well protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection. She has a written procedure which is shared with parents. She has the necessary documentation to hand to enable her to follow the correct procedures if she suspects a child is being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and have formed close attachments to the childminder contributing to the children's sense of belonging. They enjoy well planned and interesting activities both inside and outside the home, for example, attending toddler groups, library sessions and soft play. They use a wide range of stimulating resources which support and challenge their development. She observes their play, finds out what they enjoy and can do, so she can plan experiences to develop new skills and extend their learning. The childminder constantly talks to them, waits for a response and shows an interest in what they do.

Children become engrossed in activities that interest them, like playing with the play dough and painting. Their language skills are promoted well as they talk about what they are doing, for example they roll and shape play dough and talk about their day at the park whilst painting the swings, ducks and trees. Children enjoy being in the garden looking for spiders and worms. They play confidently with a good range of toys and resources promoting all areas of development. Children's self-esteem is developing as a result of the childminder encouraging and praising them and valuing what they do. Positive and warm relationships have been established and this increases children's sense of trust.

Routines are well planned but are flexible allowing children to make choices. Children independently choose from a good range of well maintained and stimulating resources which encourages learning and promotes self confidence.

The childminder is starting to implement aspects of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She intends to record how young children are developing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a written equal opportunities policy and behaviour management policy which are shared with parents. Children are confident and happy and feel a sense of belonging as the childminder knows the children well and values their individuality. They are treated with respect so they begin to learn to be polite and respect others. Children are treated with equal concern and all are encouraged to reach their full potential. Activities are adapted so children of all ages and abilities can join in. Children are encouraged to learn about their own culture

and that of others and resources promoting positive images of diversity are available to the children, for example, books dolls and small world figures.

Children are given lots of praise and encouragement which helps them feel good about themselves. They behave well because the childminder promotes their positive behaviour successfully. There are clear and consistent boundaries in place which ensures children know what is expected from them. She recognises the need to use different management strategies on individual children taking into account their age and stage of development. The use of positive strategies for managing behaviour helps children learn to understand right from wrong.

The childminder has established good relationships with parents helping to promote the children's well-being. Parent's views about their children's needs are actively sought before the childminding arrangement commences. Policies and procedures are regularly shared with parents to keep them up to date with her childcare practice. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns they may have. Although there is a clear complaints procedure in place, the complaints log does not respect confidentiality.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's individual needs are well supported by the flexible planning within a safe and well organised environment. Indoor and outdoor space is organised to maximise play opportunities allowing children to access areas and resources independently.

Written policies and procedures are used effectively to ensure children are kept safe and their welfare safeguarded. The childminder shares information daily with parents about their child's activities and care needs, enabling continuity of care. Agreements are in place with parents ensuring their wishes are clearly recorded and understood. All records are easily accessible and stored confidentially.

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 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):

- develop the complaints log to ensure confidentiality is maintained

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