



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311748
Inspection date	11 October 2006
Inspector	Shirley Peart
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 established for 19 years. She lives with her husband and their adult child in Crawcrook, Tyne and Wear, which is situated in the west of Gateshead. The home is close to the local schools, shops and library within the village of Crawcrook. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, which includes a downstairs bathroom, and there is a fully enclosed yard for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five years and two children over five years mainly on a part-time, varied basis. She also cares for one child aged over eight years.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a very clean environment. The toilet area is easily accessible on the ground floor it is bright, cheerful and adorned with children's handprints to encourage hand washing. Children have their own face cloths and hand towels which are initialled and easily accessible, as the hooks are situated at their height. Therefore, they follow very good hygiene practices independently, which ensures that their health and personal care needs are met very well.

Children have excellent manners, as they spontaneously say thank you when they are given their fruit bar and drink. The childminder is well-organised and prepares meals in advance of the children arriving, she is also flexible regarding food offered to children and happily provides food that parents supply. This ensures that children eat the food that they enjoy. A sample, healthy menu has been devised and is available in the parents file. Children's beakers and cups are marked with their initials which ensures that there is no mix up and protects them from cross infection.

Children have plenty of good opportunities to be outdoors. They regularly walk to and from nursery and school and often play outdoors in the yard or visit parks. The childminder explains to the children why walking is good for them, so that they gain an understanding of being healthy. She plans specific activities outdoors, such as 'hop-scotch' and children use a variety of outdoor equipment, such as hoops and bikes. She has completed a work shop on 'Putting outdoor play into practice' which gives the children further opportunities to benefit from stimulating activities outdoors, such as tree craft. This ensures that children's overall physical development and need for fresh air is enhanced very well.

Medication and accident recording is good, the childminder holds a relevant first aid certificate and has information displayed on how to administer first aid. A good sick children's policy is also available to parents. This ensures that children's health needs are very well attended to.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a homely, welcoming environment. The childminder uses the space in her home effectively to benefit the children. For example, older children 'chill out' in the living room after the school day if they wish and they sit together for meals in the dining room, where they also carry out their craft activities.

Children play with a range of very good equipment and there are child size tables and chairs available for them. Toys, such as train sets, construction, farm yard figures, an abundance of books and role play equipment is readily available and provides children with a very good choice. There is also a good range of diverse and cultural equipment, such as 'Grandmother' figures and ethnic dolls. The childminder also introduces natural items, such as a treasure basket for babies and acorns and conkers for counting, weighing and measuring for older children, which offers children good sensory opportunities.

Children are safe due to the effective procedures and practices in place which includes the high level of supervision provided by the childminder. For example, when children climb onto their safety seat to do their craft activity, she is close by to supervise but allows them the independence they need. Children wear fluorescent jackets when they walk to and from school and nursery, and she talks to them about safety and why they need to use the designated crossing.

Good information and procedures are in place regarding child protection. The childminder has carried out recent training and understands her role and responsibility regarding child protection. This ensures that children's welfare is very well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely settled and very happy in the childminder's care. They clearly and confidently explain what they need, what they want to do and carry out their activities independently. For example, during the gluing activity young children make statements, such as 'I need the glue and I will do it.' The childminder is highly skilled at extending the children's play very well, so that they learn and develop their communication, knowledge and understanding. She enables children to think and respond effectively as she asks open ended questions. For example, when they stick the nose and eyes on 'Humpty Dumpty' they repeat numbers, count successfully and point to their own eyes and nose. They have lots of fun as they giggle and laugh at 'Humpty's googly eyes.'

Children make independent choices and clearly indicate when they have had enough of an activity. The childminder is quick to notice and respond, as she naturally moves the children on through their play to maintain their interest and enjoyment. Young children use their imaginations exceptionally well. For example, they clearly enjoy pretending that the dolls are babies. They wrap them up, say 'shush, night, night' make excellent attempts at putting the nappy on and then put them down to sleep in the dolls cot .

Children are very confident and self-assured. During the session they spontaneously burst into song, sing familiar rhymes and carry out actions to a song that they have learnt with the childminder. They climb into the pushchair happily and clearly explain who they are going to collect from nursery. Therefore, children achieve very well and thoroughly enjoy what they do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder meets children's individual needs very well. Items in her home, such as chairs, beakers and hand towels, are initialled with the children's first letter in their name, which gives them an excellent sense of belonging. They celebrate their birthdays, cultural festivals and participate in learning about themselves and the world around them, for example, when they make 'Red Indian' costumes and do the 'Body Part' activity.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She has some relevant experience in this area and fully includes children in the

setting. The home is suitable, for example, care and facilities are all available on the ground floor so that their needs are met very well.

Children's behaviour is very good, they are confident, very settled and fully occupied in the childminder's care. The childminder goes through her behaviour policy with the parents and uses gentle reminders with the children to promote positive behaviour. For example, she asks them why they should not run in the house and follows effective, consistent routines, such as washing hands before meals and using good manners. Children are therefore learning how to behave responsibly.

Partnership with parents and carers is excellent; therefore, children are very secure and settled. Highly positive reference letters indicate that parents are extremely pleased with the provision and some children have attended for a number of years. Parents regularly request that the childminder cares for the siblings of existing minded children. They have access to relevant information on the provision, as some is displayed and procedures are readily available in the parents file.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is dedicated to her career and has nineteen years experience. She holds a recognised 'Developing Childminding Practice' course, attends relevant short courses and the annual National Childminding Association conference, which ensures that she is knowledgeable and up-to-date. She has a good network of childminding colleagues and regularly takes children to relevant drop in and toddler group sessions, so that they have a chance to socialise in different surroundings.

Documentation is good and relevant information is displayed for parents, such as the Ofsted certificate and contact poster, as well as her public liability insurance and first aid certificate. Written consent is obtained for specific trips and outings and for older children to play in the lane, which is good. However, documentation does not clearly show that general consent for outings and use of any transport is in place.

The childminder plans her day around the children and provides a range of well planned activities and projects which enhances their all round development very well. For example, children are fully involved in a good range of art and craft activities, such as making arm plaster casts out of cardboard and papier-mâché, they bake, play with play dough, do water play, have their faces painted and dress up.

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 required to; continue to provide children with a wide variety of activities and experiences to support development and learning.

The childminder continues to provide stimulating and varied activities that enhances children's all round development very well.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, 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):

- ensure that documentation clearly shows that parents have given their written consent for general outings and transport

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