



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	403166
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Marie Lefevre
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since January 2000. She is approved to mind a maximum of six children at any one time. There are currently seven children attending at various times.

The household consists of the childminder, her husband and their two children who are aged 11 and 14. Their home is a semi-detached house which is located on an established housing estate in a small rural village, close to local amenities and a short walk to the beach. The nearest large town of Ashington is a short car journey away. Minded children have access to the living room, conservatory, dining kitchen and utility room on the ground floor. The bathroom and one designated bedroom are available on the first floor. A further two bedrooms are not used for minding purposes. The front garden is open plan and used for access to the premises. The rear garden is available to the children. The family has a pet dog, two guinea pigs and two lovebirds.

The childminder takes children to local places of interest on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have opportunities to learn about health and hygiene in their daily routines. They are encouraged to take responsibility as they gain age appropriate awareness of why it is important to wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. Children benefit from the example set by the childminder. They respond really well to the childminder's requests to help tidy and are happy to join in putting small bricks away so that younger children do not have access. The childminder ensures that the setting is clean and appropriately organised for the children attending.

Children have lunch boxes as well as some snacks and drinks provided by parents. The childminder is happy to offer fresh fruit and a biscuit for snacks and would prepare lunch as a back up measure if parents do not provide for a session. Drinks of juice or water are available at all times. Parents take responsibility for ensuring that any special dietary needs are met.

Children's health requirements are highlighted in the generally well maintained records. Accident and medication recording systems are in place. The childminder makes sure that children's health needs are met, however, there are blanket parental consents for medical treatment, but not specific written consent and guidance prior to administering each specific type of medication. There is a first aid kit and a travel first aid kit, although, the household kit is mainly stocked with family remedies.

Children develop their physical and emotional well-being in a range of indoor and outdoor activities and during routines. They have supervised outdoor play on large and small equipment in the garden. As the childminder does not tend to use the car, children really benefit as they gain lots of exercise and fresh air when walking to school or to activities in the area. They may go on nature walks and enjoy chatting about the things they see, visit the beach or have energetic fun running around at the local park. Children also have opportunities to socialise with other children and adults during their daily activities.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to access the designated childcare areas with close, age appropriate supervision and support from the childminder. The premises are comfortable and mainly organised for children to use safely. The childminder encourages children to be aware of safety in the house in various ways. However, the rear garden, which is used by the children, is not totally enclosed as there are gaps in the fence. Appropriate safety measures are in place when children are taken on outings in the community, for example, they are helped to understand about road safety and being careful when near traffic. This does not apply closer to home as all children are not fully supervised when playing to the front of the premises. The external door to the rear of the

house is securely fastened to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised, however, the front door is not adequately secured.

The childminder has taken positive action in relation to safety equipment in the premises. Electric sockets are covered, radiators are regulated and a safety gate is in place to the bottom of the stairs. Fire safety measures have been taken, for example, a fire blanket is readily available in the utility room and smoke detectors are in place on both floors. Children have ready access to a range of resources so they can play in safety. Children are protected as the childminder ensures that the toys, equipment and furniture are in a safe and clean condition by checking items regularly. She also ensures that the playthings are appropriate for the age and stage of development of each child. Children receive guidance about the safe use of toys and equipment.

Children's welfare is promoted by the childminder having relevant documentation in place in relation to safety, including a current public liability insurance certificate. Although there have been no concerns to date, the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection procedures, what signs to be aware of, who to contact and what to record if any arise in the future. Therefore, children are protected in her care.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children participate in stimulating activities in a calm and friendly environment. They settle well, are at ease and develop greater self-confidence with the childminder. Children are enthusiastic as they develop their physical and communication skills, for example, as they use their imaginations constructing with bricks, playing with puzzles or enjoying chatting amicably with the childminder. A variety of art and craft materials are readily available to create, such as pictures or cards. Children concentrate really well as they use crayons and felt tip pens to carefully colour in. They learn new skills and develop their understanding of numbers, letters, shapes and colour in many age appropriate and fun ways.

The childminder uses appropriate methods to promote and reinforce learning, including giving clear guidance about activities. Children are able to develop their vocabulary skills as the childminder uses simple and clear language. They are well supported as they explore new words during discussions or develop their language skills. The childminder values children and has an understanding of how they learn and develop; this is evident in the way the children's play areas and resources are organised and in the actual care of children. She has a sound knowledge of each child and the wishes of parents to ensure there is consistency and continuity so that they can progress appropriately as they learn and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the childminder's positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual needs. There are many ways for each child to develop a greater awareness of their local community and they are able to gain some insight into the wider world. Some books and play resources in the setting help children to develop their awareness of differing

backgrounds. Gender stereotyping is discouraged as children are able to choose what they want to play with in keeping with their age-range.

Children are very well behaved during routines and activities and respond well to the childminder's calm approach as she encourages them to share and play nicely together. Children learn about valuing others from the good role model provided by the childminder. She gently and sensitively supports, praises and encourages which helps children to develop their self-esteem and sense of belonging. The childminder also encourages children to share their opinions and make decisions. Children respond well to guidance from her and they are helped to choose activities and participate fully during each session.

The childminder ensures that she has a clear awareness of the needs and wishes of the parents and the children attending. Parents are involved in planning for the care of their children and the exchange of information necessary for each child's care. The childminder keeps them informed of daily activities and events to ensure they have a clear awareness of the childcare service provided. In addition, children share their experiences with parents by taking art work home to show what they have achieved.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Effective daily routines enable children to settle well and feel happy in the setting. The records relating to the children are generally maintained as required, and the register of child attendance is mostly completed on a daily basis. Contracts and details sheets have just been updated to ensure all any necessary information is in place.

The childminder is caring, affectionate and keen to ensure that children benefit from their time in her care. This is reflected in the way the child care areas and resources are organised in her home and in some of the health and safety measures taken. In order to enhance her knowledge and understanding of childcare, the childminder has completed the Introduction to childminding practice course and has started to participate in the Developing childminding practice course. However, the childminder has not updated her first aid training, which is in breach of the Ofsted standards for registration. Therefore, overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

There were four recommendations made at the last inspection relating to safety in the bathroom, providing activities and resources that reflect equal opportunities, the security of the premises, and obtaining written parental consents in relation to back up care for the children.

A new lock which opens from outside has been fitted to the bathroom door and cleaning materials are no longer accessible to children; the back up cover plans are no longer felt to be necessary; and there are some play resources that reflect equal opportunities. However, the front entrance to the premises was not secured at the time of the current inspection.

### 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 the 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- complete an appropriate first aid course that includes training in first aid for infants and young children.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)