



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342347
Inspection date	19 February 2007
Inspector	Judith Anne Hodgson
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 satisfactory. 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 2006. She lives with her partner in a village near to Durham city. The whole of the ground floor, one upstairs bedroom and the first floor bathroom is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden to the rear of the house which is suitable for children's play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and may provide overnight care. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children, she takes children to the park.

The family has a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of appropriate well maintained toys. Older children are helped to establish suitable personal hygiene routines through being encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after being to the bathroom. Independent toilet routines are encouraged for older children, with support and supervision given to the younger children who are accompanied to the upstairs bathroom. Parents are contacted and children collected should they become ill which ensures that they are well cared for and remaining children are not at risk of cross infection. The childminder has effective hygiene routines in place to ensure that the family pet dog does not pose a health risk to children. For example the dogs food is kept away from children.

Accident and medication books are in place. These are signed by parents and kept up to date which benefits the children's health. The childminder has a suitable first aid kit that is stored in the kitchen out of children's reach. However, written permission for emergency medical care has not been obtained and this compromises the children's health.

The childminder provides a limited range of healthy meals and snacks for the children which includes chips, cake, sandwiches fruit and yogurt. She has experience of providing food that complies with parents preferences and dietary needs such as a meat free diet. A range of drinks is offered to the children on a regular basis and includes milk and fizzy drinks. Parents are made aware of their children's diet through daily discussion with the childminder.

The childminder is aware of the benefits of exercise and provides the children with opportunities for physical play in the enclosed rear garden. Children also get fresh air and exercise on regular walks to and from school and to the shops which enhances their well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder is vigilant in safeguarding the children. She welcomes them into a warm, friendly environment with a wide range of stimulating toys and activities. The rooms have good natural light and adequate space for play and rest. The front and rear doors are kept locked keeping the children secure. The children play in the living room where there is adequate floor space. They use the large range of toys provided which are appropriate for their development. They also play in the dining room on a table close to good natural light from large french windows.

The enclosed rear garden is used for outdoor play. The childminder is aware of hazards and understands the need to make the play space safe before the children go out. The gate to the garden is securely bolted above children's reach ensuring their security outside. When the children are on outings with the childminder she ensures that they hold her hand and stop at roads. She discusses road safety with the children to enhance their learning and help to keep them safe.

The childminder takes effective steps to minimise the risk of accidental injury to the children. Visual checks are made of the premises and toys are checked regularly and broken ones discarded. The kitchen has a stair gate across the door to prevent children entering thus ensuring their safety. The outside play area is checked and all hazardous materials locked away. All fire safety equipment is in place, for example, a fire blanket in the kitchen. The premises have been checked by a fire officer who has issued a statement of satisfaction in fire safety. Electric sockets are in use or are covered, and appliance cables are tucked safely away and do not pose a risk to children.

The childminder understands the signs and symptoms of child abuse. She has the necessary contact details for referral of any concerns and is aware of her responsibility in child protection issues, in relation to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, she is not confident in implementing her procedure and this has a negative effect on the children's welfare. All documentation is in place to support children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

This is a strength of the setting. The childminder is very involved in the children's play and plans activities to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment. She talks to the children throughout their play encouraging them to think about what they are doing through sensitive questioning. She asks how they are going to do their activities, and ask their opinions of the activity. She listens carefully to their responses and values their opinions. When involved in an art activity, making six pointed stars, she unobtrusively provides good support for younger children allowing them to feel a sense of achievement in what they do. The children enjoy the art activities and enthusiastically decorate their work with the very good resources provided.

Children are confident in their relationship with the childminder and will ask for her help with their activities. She plays on the floor with them becoming involved in their imaginative games. For instance, she supported younger children playing with a 'poorly' doll by providing a plaster for it's head. The toys are stored at a low level which enables the children to develop their independence as they choose their playthings. The children are able to use a console games machine with carefully vetted appropriate games. The children enjoy being here and are able to talk about their favourite toys.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the childminder's home. She takes steps to get to know the children, chatting to them about their likes and dislikes. The childminder has some knowledge of equal opportunities and has limited experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Although she has limited knowledge of this area of childcare she demonstrated a very positive attitude and stated that she would be willing to undertake training to provide an inclusive environment. There are very limited resources reflecting positive images of a wider world which has a negative impact on increasing children's knowledge of diversity.

The children are well behaved. The childminder uses a variety of strategies to encourage good behaviour. She praises children, encourages sharing and turn taking and has consistent expectations. She understands the need for age appropriate approaches to behaviour management, for example, negotiating with the older children, and distracting younger children by providing play experiences. She uses reward charts effectively with younger children.

The childminder has an effective partnership with parents. She discusses the children's needs and routines at the onset of care to provide continuity for the children. She shares information daily through discussion at the beginning and end of the session. However, confidentiality is not always maintained and this has a detrimental effect on the children's well-being. Behaviour practices are discussed and children's preferences considered. A four week induction ensures that new parents are aware of the childminder's practice before accepting a place for their children. This benefits the children as they have time to become comfortable with the childminder and the setting before care commences.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is well organised to support play opportunities and is child friendly. Children move freely from the living room to the dining room. They are able to choose toys as these are organised to be accessible and are kept at a low level, this encourages their independence. The childminder organises her time well to be able to play with the children throughout the day which helps their learning and development. Opportunities for developing social skills are built in to the routine as the childminder organises outings to the local shops. The childminder is keen to ensure that children thrive in her care and has identified training needs to enhance her practice.

The childminder has completed the relevant basic training and adult child ratios are correct. The relevant documentation is in place to support the children's well-being, for example, there is a daily register of attendance containing contact details. The children's records are stored appropriately and are available for inspection. However, the childminder's registration certificate is not on display. This has a negative impact on the children's care as not all required information is readily available for the parents.

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 the last inspection 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 satisfactory. 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):

- obtain written permission to seek any necessary medical advice or treatment in an emergency
- develop a range of nutritious healthy meals and snacks
- develop and implement a child protection procedure in line with the local safeguarding children board
- ensure that privacy and confidentiality is maintained with regard to children's records
- develop a range of resources and activities which promote children's awareness of diversity and a wider world
- ensure the registration certificate is displayed.

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