



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313980
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Kathleen Snowdon

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 1994. She lives with her husband and three children aged 17, 15 and 14 in Consett, County Durham. Her home is close to all facilities including schools, nurseries and shops. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family keep tropical fish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently minding five children under five at staggered intervals. The childminder drives to and from local nurseries to take and collect children and attends local toddler and childminder groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Satisfactory arrangements give children the nourishment that they require in order to grow and develop as they should. Parents provide balanced and appetising meals and snacks, which include lots of fruit and vegetables. These encourage the development of healthy tastes and preferences. The children have easy access to sugar free drinks throughout the day, to keep them comfortable and hydrated.

The children have lots of opportunity to be active. For example, they go for walks in the local community during which they benefit from fresh air. Regular visits to local soft play facilities allow the children to practise a range of movements, such as jumping, sliding and rolling. These activities boost the children's fitness levels and show them that exercise is fun.

Sensible arrangements are in place to deal with children who are ill. These minimise the spread of infection and common illnesses. As well as this, the children begin to associate regular routines, such as hand washing, with feeling clean and comfortable. This forms the basis of good personal hygiene.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is well lit and well organised with ample floor space. This minimises the risk of accidents and teaches children to negotiate space. External doors remain locked when minded children attend. This prevents unauthorised access to the childminder's house and prevents children from leaving without her knowledge.

Consistent reminders from the childminder teach the children how to avoid potentially hazardous areas within the home, such as kitchen cupboards. A wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate toys is readily accessible to the children. Weekly cleaning and checking routines ensure that play items remain safe and hygienic for the children to use.

The children take part in fire drills. These teach the children how to stay safe in an emergency. Alongside of this, the children are protected on a day to day basis through the childminder's awareness of child protection issues and the careful way in which she supervises them in and outside of her home. This keeps the children safe from unsuitable people and dangerous situations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Worthwhile activities keep the children engrossed and motivated. For example, the children scrutinise objects such as sponges, pegs and keys that they find in treasure baskets provided for them through the childminder's good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. These opportunities allow the children to build on their natural impulse to be curious and to explore.

An excellent range of role play props encourages the children to improvise and use their imaginations. They use one object to represent another, when they use a wine cork to imitate putting on lipstick, for example. They carry bags and push buggies and pretend to be a familiar adult, such as 'mummy'. These opportunities give the children considerable scope in which to have fun and enjoy themselves.

The well balanced daily routine ensures that the children benefit from a range of experiences. These include outings to places like the local library and the local toddler group. Here the children mix with peers and develop important social skills that teach them how to function as part of a group. Excellent relationships exist between the children and the childminder. Consequently, the children are happy, secure and well-settled.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children learn to respect difference when they hear the respectful views and opinions of the childminder when she talks about culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. However, although the children read and look at books, such as 'Tickle Tickle', which show images of people from other countries, there is an insufficient range of resources to promote the development of positive views of diversity.

Reasonable house rules teach the children boundaries and acceptable ways in which to behave. Children are not allowed to jump on the furniture, for example, and they must not run in the childminder's home. Similarly, they are expected to share things with one another and tidy up before meals. These factors teach the children to understand right from wrong and encourage the development of positive personal qualities, such as consideration and helpfulness.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Contracts are used, which set out clearly the expectations of parents and the childminder. Daily discussions keep all parties informed of the children's recent experiences. This helps parents and the childminder to meet the needs of the children as fully as possible and keeps them up to date with the children's recent experiences.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All essential records are in place. However, documentation is fairly disorganised and written consent to transport children has not been obtained from all of the parents. The registration certificate is displayed prominently. This allows parents to scrutinise the conditions of registration should they wish to. Records are kept of children's daily attendance and these include times of arrival and departure.

The childminder is aware that registered numbers must never be exceeded. She ensures that all household members aged 16 and over are police checked. These arrangements contribute to the children's ongoing safety and well-being. The childminder builds on her experience and improves her knowledge by taking part in relevant further training. Recent courses include behaviour management.

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 make improvements relating to documentation. Accident records now contain sufficient detail and are readily available for inspection. This keeps parents fully informed about the occurrence of accidents involving their children.

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):

- increase resources that reflect positive images of gender, ethnicity, culture and disability
- improve the way in which records are organised and obtain written consent from parents to transport children.

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