



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY267910
Inspection date	08 March 2007
Inspector	Sharon Greener
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 2003. She lives with her husband and children aged five and 10 years in the Peterlee area of County Durham. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom located on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five years. All of the children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder transports children in her car. She attends local carer and toddler groups three times each week.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminding environment is well maintained and hygiene standards are good. Children are encouraged to adopt suitable personal hygiene practices such as hand washing at appropriate times. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of related policies and procedures, for example, sick child, nappy changing and the administration of medication. This helps to safeguard the children's comfort and welfare.

The childminder is flexible regarding catering arrangements so as to meet the wishes of the parents, and children's specific dietary requirements and preferences. She shows a suitable awareness of the need to promote a healthy eating programme. Menus are discussed with parents and children are encouraged to eat a variety of nutritious foods. A typical snack consists of sliced fresh fruit, and drinks are offered to the children at regular intervals throughout the day. Relevant information about children's individual health-related needs is obtained from parents and the childminder works well with parents to ensure children's needs are appropriately met. This helps promote and preserve children's good health.

Children have regular opportunities for physical play both indoors and outdoors. They benefit from fresh air and exercise as they are regular visitors to the local parks and green areas. Each week, the childminder takes the children to visit a nearby indoor adventure play facility. A suitable variety of equipment is provided to enable children to develop and enhance their physical skills, for example, bats, balls, tricycles, a swing, a climbing frame and a trampoline. All children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual needs. This helps to promote their general well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a suitable understanding of related policies and procedures such as the action to be taken regarding an accident or the evacuation of the premises. She takes satisfactory steps to help her to minimise or eliminate risks to the children. The childminder completes a visual risk assessment of the resources, equipment and the childminding areas before children arrive each day. This process is ongoing throughout childminding hours. Children are closely supervised by the childminder and move freely and independently from room to room. This helps keep children safe.

Resources and equipment are clean and well maintained. The childminder explains safety rules in simple terms to the children, such as the correct use of toys and not to stand on the chairs. This helps children to develop an understanding of danger and of the need to preserve their own safety and that of others. Hazardous items are appropriately stored beyond children's reach and suitable safety equipment is in place. This helps to reduce risks and maintain a safe environment for the children. However, the childminder needs to ensure that the rear garden is suitable for use by the children prior to resuming its use for childminding purposes. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of her responsibility regarding safeguarding

children. She has a copy of the recommended child protection literature for reference purposes. This helps her to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children build very close, warm relationships with the childminder and respond positively to her. They are very relaxed and at ease in her company. The childminder is suitably aware of children's individual needs, for example, their favourite books, toys, foods they like and dislike and their individual sleep routines. Children's needs are well met. Children are animated and interested in the resources and activities made readily available to them. They self-select and use toys with growing confidence. This helps to develop and enhance their independence and decision making skills.

Children's achievements and abilities are recognised and celebrated by the childminder. They receive regular praise and their self-esteem is good. The childminder supports and reinforces children's development well. This is shown in the way that children have easy access to a satisfactory selection of age-appropriate resources and activities. Language, literacy and simple mathematical skills are well supported through the childminder's ability to engage children in purposeful play and conversation. For example, during play the childminder encourages children to name colours, shapes and letters and to link letters to the correct letter sounds. Children benefit from frequent outings to places of interest such as the local shops, the library, parks and green areas. Younger children are taken to the local playgroups several times a week. These outings help children to develop an awareness of their local environment and provide opportunities for them to socialise with others.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a suitable awareness of equal opportunity and a satisfactory selection of resources is provided to help raise children's awareness of diversity. For example, children have access to books, a globe of the world, dolls, play figures and accessories representing people with different skin tones, different cultures and disabilities. This helps to raise children's awareness of diversity and the wider world. The childminder shows a satisfactory understanding of caring for children with a disability or learning difficulty.

The childminder has a good enough knowledge of children's individual needs and responds accordingly to ensure such needs are well met. She uses appropriate behaviour management strategies well and applies them in a calm and consistent manner. Children respond positively to this and their behaviour is good. They show good self-esteem and increasing confidence. Children are well supported, encouraged to make choices and to develop their independence as appropriate to their age and ability.

Childminding policies, procedures and other general information is shared with parents during the induction process. The registration certificate and Ofsted poster are clearly displayed for the benefit of parents. The childminder works in harmony with parents to ensure children's

needs are well met. Parents are kept up to date regarding their child's progress, daily activities and other pertinent information. This is done through the regular verbal feedback given to parents, photographs shared with them and the artwork children take home. Parents have access to their child's records and are encouraged to keep the childminder informed of any relevant information that may impact upon the care of their child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The majority of the required documentation is in place and is generally up to date and suitably maintained. However, the record of children's attendance is not always accurately maintained and the childminder was in breach of the terms of her registration by caring for three children under the age of five years at the same time. This is not in-keeping with the requirements of the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding. Policies and procedures are used sufficiently well to promote children's welfare. The childminder was not aware of the recent changes to the complaints procedure as she did not have a copy of the revised National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding and the relevant Addendum. This does not effectively support operational procedures.

Children are very relaxed within the childminding environment and most at ease in the childminder's care. They have access to a satisfactory range of age-appropriate resources and activities to promote their all round development. Parents are kept suitably informed of the day-to-day activities and their child's progress. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop procedures and record keeping systems and ensure that the required written consents and contracts were completed by parents.

The majority of the required documentation and record keeping systems are in place and written consents are obtained from parents. However, the record of children's attendance is not accurately maintained at all times. This does not help to support operational procedures effectively.

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 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 a copy of the revised National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding and the Addendum to these standards for reference purposes
- ensure that the conditions stipulated on the registration certificate and the requirements as stated in the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding are adhered to at all times
- complete a risk assessment of the rear garden prior to resuming use of the garden for childminding purposes.

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