



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310107
Inspection date	09 March 2007
Inspector	Jim Bostock
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 registered since 1992. She lives with her husband and three school-age children in the Whitley Bay area of North Tyneside, within walking distance of the local amenities. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. At the time of inspection there were seven children on the childminding register, all minded on a part-time basis. The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and she is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children receive a completely balanced and healthy diet including the provision of fruit, freshly prepared meals, snacks and drinks each day. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the nutritional needs of children and helps them learn about foods that are good for them. For instance, children know that carrots help them see better in the dark and that fruit and cheese are good for them. Children enjoy the fruit, having a choice of apples, pears, oranges, grapes and bananas. Their individual dietary needs are recorded and reflected in the meals and snacks provided. Children benefit from the good communication between the childminder and parents about food and drink issues, with the childminder fully respecting any requests from parents. Children have easy and constant access to drinking water within the playrooms. They chat happily at meal times and learn about manners and helping each other. For instance, one child helped another learn how to eat spaghetti bolognese by demonstrating for the child.

Children's health and hygiene is promoted very well through the childminder having undertaken food hygiene, dental health and first aid training. Children are helped to carry out daily routines, including washing their hands before eating and after toileting. There are excellent arrangements in place to prevent cross-infection, with separate towels for each child and written procedures for health and hygiene which the childminder follows. Accidents and medicine administered are recorded appropriately, however, not all are fully shared with parents as some have not been countersigned.

Children have excellent opportunities to engage in active play to promote their physical development. They regularly use the outdoor area where they play with push and ride toys, bats and balls, a climbing frame, a playhouse, tunnels, swings and a slide. They enjoy many outings to interesting places, such as the beach where they dig in the sand, a local nature park, a community farm, local parks and toddler groups. Outings are fully discussed with parents and safety is given a high priority.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant and takes excellent precautions to reduce potential hazards. She has an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits and how to help children develop an excellent understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, they practise emergency fire evacuation procedures regularly and learn about road safety very well. The childminder ensures that children are closely supervised to prevent accidents and keep them safe. Children use an excellent range of high quality toys and equipment that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Regular communication with parents contributes to children's safety.

Children are extremely well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder has attended recent training courses in child protection and is fully aware of the types of abuse

and the signs to look for. She fully understands the procedures to follow if there are any concerns and gives high priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are helped to settle well because the childminder is sensitive towards their individual needs. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them to develop a strong sense of self. Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and their progress and achievement is outstanding, because she is very skilled and has an excellent understanding of the age and stage of development of the children who attend. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult-child interactions. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in with a diverse range of interesting activities and experiences. For example, the childminder links play to events, as a child who chose a steering wheel to play with was involved in a discussion about trips out by the childminder. She uses very good open questions to help children explore and discuss events. Children are interested in their play and concentrate very well. Their progress is fully coordinated with parents, who have access to excellent development records, photos, written plans and daily discussions about their children. The childminder uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance to the foundation stage to fully support children's development. She organises the main playroom so that children of any age can easily access the toys and playthings. They enjoy playing with a varied and stimulating range of play equipment, such as treasure baskets, paint and drawing, construction and imaginative role play. Activities are organised along themes, the current theme being 'me, myself and I'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for as individuals with differences being acknowledged and enjoyed. Children gain a very good understanding of the wider world and their local community through outings and topical visits connected to the theme of activities. There are very good activities, toys and resources related to multicultural play and the childminder has an excellent understanding of equal opportunity and disability issues. From these, children develop an awareness of and positive attitude towards difference.

Children learn to be respectful and interact positively with others because the childminder is a very good role model. She is gentle, kind, patient and extremely responsive with the children. They know and follow the rules, for example, washing their hands before eating. They learn about manners and develop independence very well. Children develop self-confidence very well because they receive lots of praise and encouragement. They are eager to participate in activities and respond very well to the childminder. They learn to share, relate well to each other and their behaviour is excellent.

Relationships with parents are promoted and developed very well. Their comments about the service provided are extremely positive. They are kept informed of their child's progress and of details of their physical care on a daily basis, both verbally and from the excellent individual

files. Parents are fully consulted about all aspects of the care provided, with the childminder discussing all issues and incorporating parents requests into her service. Parents provide written information for the childminder about their children and have contracts with her to ensure the relationship is on the correct footing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is focused and dedicated to providing a high standard of care in her service. She has achieved level three in the Quality First assessment from the National Childminding Association and completed many training courses, including the Diploma in Childminding Practice. This, allied with her 20 years of experience as a childminder, means she has an excellent knowledge of childcare issues for the benefit of the minded children. The childcare area is extremely well organised to provide suitable settings for a wide variety of activities to be successfully provided. Children respond very well to the organisation in place and enthusiastically partake in the stimulating programme of activities.

There is a strong daily routine in place; children are confident in the pattern of the session, what resources are available and the positive relationships they have developed with each other and the childminder.

All required documentation is in place. The childminder obtains required information from parents and uses it effectively to meet the needs of each child, such as ensuring that children are not provided with unsuitable food items at snack time. However, not all accident and medicine records have been fully shared with parents. There is a comprehensive policy file in place which outlines clearly how the service should function. Parents are given free access to these policies at all times. All information is maintained in an organised and confidential manner.

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 have a sick child policy. A comprehensive written policy is now available for parents.

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 parents countersign all accident and medicine administration records.

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