



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264209
Inspection date	13 February 2007
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged eight, five and two years. She is registered to care for six children and currently has seven children on roll on a part time basis. They live in a house in West Auckland, which has local amenities within walking distance. The whole of the downstairs area is used for childminding. The childminder regularly visits toddler groups and is a member of local childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm and clean family home, where they are supported in staying healthy. Consistent adult guidance and support ensures that children gain a good understanding of hygiene. The childminder ensures that young children wash their hands before food and

after the toilet, whilst older children are encouraged to become more independent, washing hands without prompting and learning why they need to do it. The childminder ensures that children use their own face clothes, towels and toothbrushes to reduce the risk of cross-infection and illness. Children's health and well-being is further promoted by a clear written sickness policy and effective recording of accidents, medication and consent for emergency treatment.

Children benefit from daily fresh air, which contributes to their good health. They go for walks to the local park, to Hamsterley Forest and to children's farms. The childminder devises treasure hunts for the children while they are out walking, they go on Easter egg hunts and collect leaves to make autumn pictures. The children also visit local soft play areas and attend rhythm and rhyme sessions where they are free to move around and gain increasing control over their bodies in a safe environment. The childminder ensures that the children have appropriate arrangements for children to rest. She knows the children well and recognises when they need to sleep. As a result, the children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of a healthy and balanced diet. Parents usually provide packed lunches. However, the childminder ensures that any meals or snacks provided are healthy and nutritious, for example, fruit, yoghurts and homemade dinners with vegetables. Children have constant access to drinks throughout the day. The childminder ensures that any individual dietary needs of the children are met in line with requests from parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where most of the risks have been identified and minimised through written risk assessments. This enables children to move around freely, safely and independently. Children are kept safe as the childminder maintains close supervision of the children at all times and uses appropriate safety equipment and procedures. For example, socket covers, smoke detectors and locked doors. However, hazardous cleaning materials are kept in unlocked kitchen cupboards, which potentially compromises children's safety. There is a clear written fire evacuation procedure and regular health and safety checks are carried out by the childminder. House rules such as no hitting, climbing and running help children to learn about keeping themselves safe along with practising regular fire drills.

Children are kept safe outdoors as the childminder has suitable procedures in place. Young children are securely strapped into buggies or on reins, whilst older children learn about road safety. The childminder ensures that she carries a mobile phone, first aid kit and contact details for parents whilst on outings. Children are restrained in age appropriate car seats and written consents for outings are in place, ensuring children's welfare is safeguarded.

The room is organised so that children have space to play freely and safely. Toys and resources are stored in boxes which the children freely choose from. The childminder monitors the toys and rotates the boxes regularly to ensure children have access to a variety of toys which are safe and appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children. The childminder

ensures that individual children's needs are met as she has a range of age appropriate equipment such as, high chairs, stepping stools, a potty and a travel cot.

Children are well protected as the childminder has good understanding of her role in child protection and is confident about her ability to recognise possible signs of abuse. She has a written child protection policy in place and is aware of the procedures to follow if she suspected abuse. However, she is less confident about the correct procedures to follow if an allegation was made against herself.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder plans a broad range of stimulating and interesting activities for the children both inside and outside of the home. Activities are fun, and purposeful, as they promote learning and development. For example, they go on trips to the farm, make art and craft objects from recycled tubs and cartons, go on nature walks to collect leaves and make and bake their own pizza's. The children take part in a pirate theme party which they help to organise, making costumes, decorating the garden, having their faces painted and enjoying fun and games. The children have good opportunities to socialise with other children through visits to the local soft play area and toddler groups.

The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this understanding to try and help promote independence and development with the children, for example, feeding themselves. The childminder is enthusiastic and is fully involved in the children's activities. They sit on her knee and sing nursery rhymes, read books and she joins in as they throw and catch balls. She is affectionate with the children and recognises when they need cuddles and reassurance, as a result they are happy and settled in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children learn about the wider world through access to dressing up clothes, books and jigsaws as well as through well planned activities. For example, to celebrate the Chinese New Year, the childminder has planned a Chinese menu with the children and they are making lanterns. They go to the library to look at books about how travelling families live. Children learn about their local community through visits to the library, to the shops and to the local prisoner of war camp. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has a good understanding of the needs of the individual children through previous work and is committed to working with parents to ensure quality of care.

The childminder helps children to develop good levels of self esteem and confidence as she regularly praises and encourages them. She has realistic expectations of behaviour and uses age appropriate strategies to promote good behaviour. The children are encouraged to share with each other, they are gentle and kind, cuddle each other and behave well. They learn right from wrong not only from the childminder but also from the other children, as they remind

each other of the house rules. The childminder makes good use of her time, spending quality one to one time with one child as another sleeps. This helps the children to understand that they are valued and cared for as individuals.

Children benefit from a positive relationship between parents and the childminder. Parents receive an introduction pack which gives information about the childminder and her policies and procedures, including the complaints procedure; these are in line with regulation. The childminder consults with parents on all aspects of the children's care to ensure that individual needs can be met. They are kept informed of their children's progress through daily verbal feedback and older children keep scrapbooks of the activities they have done. Parents express positive views about the childminder and the service she provides. They value her commitment to the children and comment on how happy the children are in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and organised family home where they are safe and secure. Resources and toys are effectively organised so that children can access them freely, promoting independence and confidence.

The children benefit from the childminder active involvement in the local childminding network. She regularly meets with other local childminders to organise trips out and fun activity days. The childminder is committed to ongoing personal development to broaden her experiences and knowledge and improve the children's quality of care. Including, diversity and equal opportunities, promoting social and emotional development, promoting physical development and behaviour management.

Documentation is well organised and securely stored to ensure confidentiality. Children's personal and attendance records are up to date and there is a comprehensive list of policies and procedures in place to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. The childminder's registration certificate is clearly displayed, ratios are adhered to and all adults within the house have undergone relevant checks to ensure their suitability.

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 obtain consent for emergency treatment and to practice and record fire drills. The childminder now has consent in place for emergency treatment. She has a written fire procedure in place and carries out regular fire drills.

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 complaint 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):

- further develop knowledge and understanding regarding a child protection allegation being made against the childminder
- ensure that children are unable to access hazardous cleaning materials.

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