



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	405457
Inspection date	20 March 2007
Inspector	Valerie Thomas
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1984. She lives in a village in Newcastle under Lyme within walking distance of local shops, parks and schools. The whole of the house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children during the day and four children for overnight care. She is currently caring for four children under five years on a part time basis and two children over five years before and after school.

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and visits a local activity centre each week. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is part of the Newcastle under Lyme Accredited Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The extremely effective health and hygiene procedures ensure children's health is thoroughly promoted. Children independently wash their hands before their snack and the childminder ensures this is fully effective by reminding them to wash the backs of their hands. The excellent routines help children to understand that they need to put their hand over their mouth when coughing and they confidently explain that their hands have germs on them and that is why they need to wash them. Procedures for nappy changing are very good and precautions such as wearing gloves and aprons help to prevent cross-contamination. Good hygiene exists throughout the home and this helps children to remain healthy.

Children's health and safety is promoted successfully through the accurate and well organised documents for recording accidents and medication. The childminder fully understands all correct procedures to follow and ensures all information is exchanged with parents. This ensures children's welfare is extremely well safeguarded.

The highly healthy and nutritional meals provided and the choices children are encouraged to make promote their good health effectively. Children choose fruit for their snack from the cupboard and further encouragement by the childminder to try other fruits as well extends their choices. High importance is placed on helping children to understand which foods are good for them. They go to the shop to buy vegetables and then have an opportunity to make vegetable soup with the childminder. In addition they visit an allotment where they are able to plant vegetables and are currently looking how potatoes are growing shoots. Children are able to distinguish which foods are good or bad for their teeth and know that sweets cause tooth decay. The childminder is very proactive in involving children in mealtimes and encourages them to cut up their fruit and children show excellent skills as they put the curry and rice on their plate. Consequently, children develop an extremely positive attitude to healthy eating.

Children have a wide range of extensive activities to promote their physical development and many opportunities to play outside in the fresh air. They enjoy playing on the cars and bikes outside which occurs regularly and have lots of fun running around using their energy when they go to the local school. The childminder's commitment to promoting children's good health is evident through the weekly visits to a local activity centre and many trips to the park. Children excitedly take part in a music and movement session and show much enthusiasm as they jump up high and stoop to touch the ground and the childminder's active involvement adds to the fun. Consequently, the excellent opportunities provided have a significant impact on developing a healthy lifestyle for children and encourages them to develop a positive attitude to exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive on the inspiring and stimulating environment and there is more than enough space within the home to enable them to play comfortably with toys and equipment. Rooms are very child friendly with substantial amounts of children's work displayed and posters to

encourage their learning. For example, there are menu boards for children to choose what they want to eat and a word board so that they can express how they feel. The vast range of high quality toys and equipment available ensure that children are stimulated and their learning is fully promoted at all times. They are very well organised on low shelving to allow good accessibility which enables children to have optimum choice and make decisions about their play. The childminder's systematic methods for ensuring the safety of toys and equipment helps to fully protect children from harm and helps them stay safe.

The excellent procedures for safety implemented by the childminder help to ensure children's safety at all times. The written risk assessments which are completed regularly ensure all areas are safe and high importance is placed on security both indoors and out. Fire safety within the home is extremely well promoted. Smoke alarms are often tested and carbon monoxide detectors are present which improves children's safety both during the day and if staying overnight. Comprehensive fire evacuation procedures are in place and the childminders forward thinking ensures an exceptional level of safety for children. A fire ladder is available for evacuation from the first floor and children show extreme confidence when explaining that they need to 'stop, drop and roll' in the instance of a fire. High importance is placed on children learning how to keep themselves safe. Their knowledge of how to cross roads safely is exceptional. On the way to school they stop at every kerb to stop, look and listen and fully understand the need for their wrist straps and reins. Supervision of children is very good at all times. The childminder is very successful in developing children's independence and enabling them to take risks without jeopardising their safety. Children competently climb up on to the stools in the kitchen for their snack and confidently use knives to cut their own fruit.

The childminder's superior knowledge of child protection issues ensures children are fully protected from harm or neglect and that their welfare is fully safeguarded. She has attended advanced training in child protection and has a comprehensive understanding of the indicators of abuse. The detailed child protection policy gives clear guidance and the childminder is extremely aware of her responsibility for reporting concerns following the correct procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder's excellent knowledge and effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework helps to promote young children's learning and development and promotes very positive outcomes for them. There is extensive planning in place which clearly links the framework to the Foundation Stage to ensure care and learning are fully integrated. Children flourish and are inspired through the proactive and successful approach the childminder has towards developing their learning. The excellent range of activities available to children ensures that they are extremely motivated and stimulated and that they are making great strides in their learning. The highly positive and caring interaction shown by the childminder towards children ensures they are very happy, confident and thrilled to be in the setting. The childminder knows the children very well and responds to their interests enthusiastically. She uses innovative ways of extending learning such as when taking children to school they use the hand rail by the nursery to call down the tube. Children stand at one end and call 'hello' and then listen to the childminder calling 'hello' and then discuss how the voices sound different.

Discussion with the childminder demonstrates that activities for very young children help them to develop communication skills, develop their learning and promote their growth and sense of belonging. Encouragement to reach out for toys is developing their mobility and the introduction of 'treasure baskets' where they can explore a vast range of natural materials enables them to successfully develop their senses. For school age children lots of free choice is given and they enjoy taking part in craft activities and working with the younger ones. During school holidays many trips to places of interest such as the zoo, parks and nature areas take place.

Children show much delight and wonder as they excitedly show the box on the living room table explaining that there are tadpoles in the water and showing the photographs of when they had been to the dingle to collect the frog spawn. Photos show the children holding the frog spawn and their faces look bright with awe. They continue to talk about how the tadpoles will turn into frogs as they watch them swimming around in the water. The childminder has books and pictures and small models of tadpoles and frogs which she uses to further extend children's learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals and in some instances exceeding what is expected of them. The childminder's extensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage and exceptional planning helps to ensure children achieve their full potential. It contains very detailed information which links clearly to the stepping stones and highlights individual learning of each child and where they need support. Assessment procedures are extremely robust and show clearly the next steps in children's individual learning. Optimum methods and challenges are used to develop children's learning through excellent open ended questions such as asking why Africans sometimes paint their bodies and discussing shadows on the way to school. Behaviour management is extremely effective and results in a very harmonious environment for children. The childminder's enthusiasm and purposeful engagement in children's play and learning ensures children's are motivated and interested.

Children are very confident and are keen to learn. They show excellent attitudes to learning as they excitedly explain things they know such as showing different countries on the maps. Their attention span is very good and they are keen to read the words in their book. Relationships with each other are very good and they are thrilled when they show their painted faces to their friends. Children behave very well and show great respect for each other. Children's reading skills are exceptional and exceed the level that is expected for their age. They sit and read the short sentences in the book with great confidence and know the sounds of individual letters. Children are extremely confident and fluent speakers and talk about a trip to the seaside when looking at the book and the childminder's excellent skills in encouraging them to think and express their ideas contributes immensely to the development in their language for thinking.

Mathematical skills are very good and children use and understand numbers successfully. They count very confidently as they climb up the stairs and count up to nine matching number to object. They compare sets of objects very well as they count out six dominoes for themselves so that everyone has the same amount and know if someone has more or less than them.

Children demonstrate an exceptionally good knowledge of size as they look at their shadows on the way to school. They know whose is the biggest and smallest and then walk forward to make their shadow the biggest. They confidently name shapes and can use their hands to make a triangle and a rectangle. Exceedingly good opportunities are provided for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are very interested in learning about other cultures. They concentrate very well as they listen to the story about Africa and take on board that some cultures use their hands to eat with, explaining how they have eaten their yoghurt with their fingers. They learn about change and are very excited when talking about the tadpoles. Photographs demonstrate that children have planted hyacinth bulbs, explored how ice melts and made scrambled eggs. Children enthusiastically discuss how they went on a train excitedly explaining how the guard blows the whistle so that it can go and that they went on a trip to Crewe.

Children are making excellent progress with their physical skills. They have lots of fun playing on the cars outside and can pedal the tractor with good skill. Photographs show children confidently climbing on slides and crawling and jumping off equipment when in the activity centre. Fine motor skills are very well developed and children demonstrate very good dexterity when painting with brushes and using pincers to pick up the rice. They match movements to music very well clapping their hands and banging the sticks on the drum to the rhythm. Children have excellent opportunities to explore texture and colour. They make popcorn and use this to paint buds for the tree and make prints using the leaves they collect. They have great fun exploring the shaving foam with their hands and explore other media such as dough, water and sand. High priority is given to the expression of feelings through discussion and the childminder continually encourages children to explain how they are feeling and why. Consequently, children are very confident and relaxed in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is highly proactive in promoting equal opportunities for all children. Methods to ensure children's needs are met are very effective and ensures they are valued as individuals. Children are always listened to and the childminder successfully involves them all in making choices. They are eager to serve their own food and their wishes are fully respected as some of the children choose to have rice pudding rather than yoghurt. The extensive range of resources and the exceptionally forward thinking of the childminder help to raise children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others very well. Children sit together and look at books and pictures of people from Africa and learn why some paint their bodies. They also learn that gestures can be used by people who cannot speak and are learning how to use sign language such as using their hands to sign green and yellow. The many visits to local places of interest and optimum opportunities for children to learn about the world they live in helps children develop a very good awareness of the world around them and become involved in the local community. Children take great delight in showing their knowledge of where countries such as India, China and Italy are on the map and they know that they live in England in the United Kingdom. Currently there are no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, the childminder's extremely good understanding of ensuring inclusion and her in

depth knowledge of the 'Special Needs Code of Practice' ensures that systems implemented will be very supportive of children and their needs.

Children benefit from the excellent procedures used by the childminder to manage behaviour. They ensure children feel secure and confident knowing what they can and cannot do and help them to manage their feelings. High importance is placed on encouraging children to negotiate with each other and this is extremely effective as they share the paints when painting their faces. Children behave very well and use their manners to an exceptional standard as they ask 'please may I get down from the table' without being prompted. The very effective use of praise and encouragement helps children to develop a very high level of self-esteem. Children enjoy being told that their reading is wonderful and that their faces look beautiful. Children are constantly encouraged to express their feelings and puppets have been used to introduce the concept of bullying and how it makes people feel. As a result children's social skills are developing very well and they are very confident to express their feelings. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The professional manner that the childminder adopts in exchanging detailed information with parents ensures that relationships are very positive and children are extremely well cared for. Individual records are completed and there is a clear settling in procedure for new children. Parents receive a prospectus and a copy of all relevant policies and these are fully discussed to ensure consistency for children. Additional information is displayed and there is a procedure for recording complaints which parents are able to view. Top priority is given to keeping parents informed about their children. Each child has a daily diary to share children's well being such as food intake and nappy changes for young babies. In addition to this there are excellent records kept of children's progress with very detailed information on their achievements each week and these are shared with parents very regularly. This enables the childminder and parents to work together to meet the needs of the child which means that they are extremely settled, confident and very happy in the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is outstanding. Children flourish because of the constant exchange of information between the childminder and their parents. The systematic sharing of children's progress ensures parents are fully informed and enables them to see how well their child is progressing or where they need support. The proactive way in which the childminder involves parents in their child's learning such as taking reading books home ensures children are making excellent progress. Extensive information is available on the educational programme provided as part of the prospectus and details of the current topic are shared each week.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The exceptional level of training attended ensures the childminder has a superior knowledge of childcare issues and is able to provide and plan an extensive range of activities to meet children's individual needs. This ensures the care and learning for children is excellent. For example, she has recently completed a level 3 childcare qualification and attended training for 'Hearing impairment', 'Montessori', 'Supporting early reading and writing' and 'Planning for the Foundation stage'.

The professional commitment to devising detailed written policies and constant review of practice which is over and above requirements ensures children are extremely well cared for and their well being is given top priority. The childminder's knowledge of the standards and regulations is excellent and ensures that information for parents is always up to date. Although there are no children currently cared for overnight the childminder's superior knowledge of the requirements for overnight care ensure that care will be of an excellent standard. The excellent level of documentation ensures children are extremely well supported and the active role of the childminder ensures it is constantly reviewed through updating records systematically.

Organisation is exceptional and helps children to flourish. The extremely accessible toys and equipment help to maintain children's enthusiasm and interest and build on their natural curiosity as learners. The childminder is accredited to provide early education to children over three years and is fully supported by the network co-ordinator who visits her every six weeks. In addition to this network meetings are attended regularly. The childminder's dedication to developing her knowledge and planning of the educational programme helps to ensure that activities are purposeful and very stimulating for children. This ensures that they are eager and confident learners. The childminder's comprehensive and meticulous planning and recording of progress ensures children are making outstanding progress. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to implement a procedure to record incidents of physical intervention and to improve the accuracy of the details recorded in the medication book. A system is now available to record any incidents where the childminder may need to use physical intervention although none have occurred. The book used to record medication contains all required details including parents written consent to administer medication and their signature to acknowledge the entry. The improvement in the childminder's procedures ensures children's health and safety is fully promoted.

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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