



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313996
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Judith Anne Hodgson
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 has been registered since 1997. She lives with her husband and their child who is under the age of 16 years, in a village in the Chester-Le-Street district of County Durham. The home is situated close to shops, schools and pre school facilities. The whole of the ground floor and the rear garden may be used for childminding. The childminder takes children to a toddler group, walking, to the library and to museums.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is currently caring for two children, one under the age of five years and one child over the age of five years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are healthy and follow good hygiene routines. The children use the ground floor toilet where liquid soap and hand towels are provided. Hand washing routines are supervised and shared with the younger children. Older children are independent in self-care but are reminded to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. The childminder discusses 'getting rid of germs' with the children which helps them to safeguard their health.

The childminder has a suitably stocked first aid kit, which is safely stored, and she holds a current first aid certificate. An accident and medication book is maintained and is up to date. Although verbal emergency medical consent from parents is obtained, there is no written permission in place. The childminder discusses exclusion for sick children with the parents, who know not to bring their children when they are ill, so minimising cross infection.

The childminder prepares a wide range of healthy snacks such as fruit and raw vegetables with cake and biscuits as occasional treats. The childminder understands the benefits of a healthy diet and prepares a variety of nutritious midday meals with fresh vegetables. The children are encouraged to choose healthy options as they are given a choice of foods at snack time. She talks to the children about healthy foods and treats such as chocolate cake and biscuits, and encourages the children to choose a healthy lunch when chocolate cake is chosen as a treat at snack time. This increases the children's knowledge of what is healthy and helps to maintain a nutritionally balanced diet. Juice and water are available for children on request and the childminder regularly offers drinks to younger children. They use individual cups and the childminder also provides drinks in the children's own cups when attending toddler group so protecting the children from cross infection.

The childminder encourages the children to be active. They benefit from walks to the park and visits to a toddler group where they have opportunities for fresh air and physical play. The childminder ensures that the park equipment is safe for the children to use. She cleans the equipment with absorbent paper before use.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a warm, friendly environment. There is a wide range of well maintained, clean toys which are checked regularly to ensure safety. The children play in a light and airy room that has large areas of floor space available for using the small world toys and train tracks. The toys are suitably stored and easily accessible to children to allow them to choose their activities. The rear garden is normally used for outdoor play but is not in use at the moment as the fence is in need of repair.

The childminder takes steps to protect the children from accidental injury such as having protective corners fitted to the coffee table and encouraging the children to be tidy to avoid tripping. The house doors are kept locked and the children are closely supervised both indoors

and out thus ensuring their safety. All fire safety requirements are in place. The childminder maintains the children's safety on outings through having the appropriate restraints in the car and hand holding when walking. However, written permission has not been obtained from the parents for the children to be transported in a vehicle; the childminder has verbal permission which is not sufficient.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and is aware of her responsibility in these matters.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

This is a strength of the provision. There is a good relationship between the children and the childminder. She encourages the children to be independent and self confident, and listens carefully to them and responds in a very positive and encouraging manner. When sharing a book she uses sensitive questioning to encourage the children to think about what they are seeing and helps them to make connections to extend their learning. She enhances their language and mathematical development when sharing books, counting and matching 'welly boots'. Children have fun and enjoy this interaction.

There are good resources to provide a variety of play opportunities. The resources are available for children to choose, and they are helped with the larger items. Children enjoy choosing from a variety of story and puzzle books. They are encouraged to use their imagination, for example in a delightful activity, when playing with a doll, children used cushions to build a pretend bed and put the 'baby' to sleep.

Activities follow the children's preferences and the childminder joins in their games introducing new vocabulary, gently instructing and demonstrating. When sharing a book, the children move close to the childminder as they sing together trying out different rhymes. The children make good progress and enjoy being in the childminder's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at this provision. They are at ease and they initiate conversations readily as they are encouraged to share books and activities with the childminder. The children develop their self-esteem as they approach the childminder for affection which is freely given. The warm relationships between the childminder and the children are reinforced through smiles, gestures and cuddles. The children are given much praise for their efforts which reinforces good behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with in a sensitive manner, suited to the age and development of the children. Gentle reminders and high expectations ensure good standards of behaviour.

The childminder has a reasonable knowledge of equal opportunities in practice but has very basic resources reflecting positive images of diversity. This means that activities involving ideas and images from other cultures are limited, restricting the children's knowledge of the wider world. She has appropriate knowledge and experience of caring for children with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities and understands the importance of discussing routines and care needs with the children's parents.

The childminder exchanges information with parents informally as the need arises and provides some photographs of the children involved in activities. She discusses the children's needs with new parents to develop continuity of care. However, the system for sharing information and recording parental permissions is not robust. Some records are available for parents although the documentation is not well organised and parents may not be provided with all the relevant information.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder has 10 years experience of childminding and organises the space in her home to enable freedom of movement for the children who have adequate play space and space to relax. The resources are appropriately stored and accessible to the children. This encourages independence in their daily routines. The childminder organises her time to allow her to play with the children which supports their care and learning, for instance, she invites children to share a book with her and initiates discussions on matching activities. She has completed a relevant first aid course which has a positive impact on the children's welfare.

She understands and implements the required policies to safeguard the children in her care and most of the required documentation is in place. However, some written permissions are not obtained which compromises the children's safety. Available records are stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

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 provide more resources to promote multicultural awareness. She has made limited progress by only providing one multicultural doll.

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):

- ensure that all required written permissions are in place
- develop a range of activities to increase children's awareness of a wider world
- ensure that the rear garden is made safe before use.

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