



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 316883
Inspection date 23 August 2005
Inspector Sandra Elizabeth Williams

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 was registered in 1997. She lives with her husband in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding apart from the front and back bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children aged from two years to eight years.

She lives within walking distance of local amenities such as shops, parks and schools

and attends local parent and toddler groups. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder supports children with special needs. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an active member of a local childminding group. She has NNEB and NVQ3 qualifications in early years childcare and education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where the childminder implements good hygiene procedures which minimise the risk of cross infection to children. Young children demonstrate their developing understanding of good hygiene and personal care as they wash their hands after using the toilet. They understand that they need to wash their hands in order to get rid of germs. The childminder has good hygiene procedures to ensure that the dog is kept clean and does not pose a health risk to the children.

Clear procedures are in place to meet the health needs of all children. Children's individual needs are well cared for by the use of medication records and appropriate written consents from parents. The children's health needs are enhanced as the childminder ensures that her first aid certificate is kept up-to-date.

Children's physical skills are fostered as they engage in physical activities which contribute to their good health. Children are taken on regular outings to local parks and places of interest where they enjoy playing on the various play equipment, which enable them to exercise and to develop their physical skills such as balancing, climbing and jumping. Young children's routines are followed with regard to sleep patterns as the childminder has a designated sleep area which provides a secure and familiar environment in which children can rest according to their needs.

Children are nourished and are beginning to learn about healthy eating because the childminder encourages them to eat nutritious snacks such as strawberries, bananas and other more unusual fruits which the children choose whilst on shopping trips with the childminder. The childminder talks to the children about healthy foods and why they are better for their health than sweets and chocolates. Healthy drinks such as water, low sugar juices and milk are readily available for the children. Children's individual dietary needs are well met as the childminder works closely with the parents towards a consistently healthy diet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and generally safe indoor and outdoor environment which is carefully thought-out. Children are able to move about with confidence as the childminder has organised space effectively to promote their

growing independence. For example, the outside play area is secure and free from hazards therefore allowing children the freedom to explore their surroundings. The children have the ability to make choices about where in the house they would like to play, for example the conservatory, the lounge or the front room, which helps them to develop their sense of independence.

Children benefit from a range of play equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children are protected from harm as the childminder checks the equipment regularly and involves the children in this process. Children have a good understanding about how the toys are organised and they develop their independence by choosing toys to play with. The childminder ensures that the children have a wide variety of toys to play with and she rotates them in a planned way so that the children do not get bored.

Children are cared for in an environment which is generally free from hazards; however, some relatively minor issues identified require attention in order to further minimise risks to the children. The fire blanket in the kitchen is not easily accessible and the first aid kit does not contain all the required items. The children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe because the childminder develops their knowledge and understanding. For example, when on outings, if it is sunny, the children know that they need to protect themselves from the sun by wearing sun hats and sun screen.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect, also whom she would contact to report any child protection concerns. She would take prompt action if she felt a child was at risk of harm, thus protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's care because she provides an appropriate level of individual attention to all the children who attend. Children enjoy positive relationships with the childminder and are stimulated by the positive interaction with her. This contributes to the children's sense of belonging. Children have trusting relationships with the childminder and settle confidently with her. Children feel secure as the childminder shows her affection by providing positive encouragement and praise. They are interested in the activities provided by the childminder. The children enjoy playing together by threading beads. This activity is much enjoyed by the children and they concentrate on it for some time. The childminder uses this opportunity well to develop the children's fine motor skills, counting skills, identification of colours, shapes, sizes and lengths. This is undertaken in a fun way. Children's language skills are fostered through the childminder's skilful questioning and prompting of their recall skills about recent trips out.

Children's general development is promoted by the childminder ensuring that they are provided with a range of varied activities. Children particularly enjoy creative activities such as making cards for special occasions. They enjoy going for outings to the park and the beach and collect leaves to bring home for their art work.

Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the childminder sets clear boundaries for example, taking turns and sharing with each other.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop positive images of a diverse society through the resources that the childminder provides. For example they enjoy playing with jigsaws and books that depict people from different cultures. The children enjoy a range of equipment as the childminder utilises the local toy library where she accesses multicultural toys such as ethnic puppets, dressing up costumes and books which provide the children with positive images of different cultures. The children also learn about different cultures as they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year by eating Chinese food with chop sticks. Children learn about the local community as they enjoy regular trips to the park, toddlers, the pet shop and the wildlife park. They also enjoy attending activities organised by the local childminder's group such as sports days and picnics. This gives them the opportunity to socialise with other children and childminders.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are well met. The childminder shows due regard towards the care of children with special needs and works closely with parents to ensure that their children's individual needs are met. Children with problems such as delayed speech for example, are supported by the childminder as she encourages them to develop their language skills through every day conversations and positive encouragement and praise.

Children understand what is expected of them and learn to respect the childminder's simple rules such as saying please and thank you. Children are praised for good behaviour and individual achievements, thus building their confidence and self esteem. This helps the children to feel secure in their environment.

Children benefit from the positive partnership the childminder has developed with the parents. Parents' views about their children's needs are actively sought before the children start and thereafter on a regular basis. Information about daily events and children's progress is shared with parents on a regular basis to promote the needs of individual children and provide continuity of care for all concerned. This system of verbal feedback is enhanced by the childminder providing the parents with a scrap book containing examples of the children's art work.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is good because of the appropriate organisation and the childminder's day-to-day management of the provision. Children are relaxed and confident in the environment due to the good organisation for their care and learning by the childminder. Children's play opportunities are supported by the way that the childminder organises the premises, thus allowing children to move about easily. The

childminder's commitment to training and keeping up-to-date with current child care practices enhances the quality of care provided for the children.

Children's needs are supported through the childminder's thorough recording systems.

All records and documentation are in place and meet the required standard, which contributes to the continuity of care for the children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder agreed to compile a written fire procedure and undertake regular fire drills. This action has been completed and enhances the level of fire safety within the home. It was also agreed that the childminder would record the full names of the children in the daily register, together with the times of arrival and departure. This action has been met, thus providing a more accurate record of attendance. The childminder agreed to obtain up-to-date guidance regarding child protection. She has obtained written guidance from the Local Authority and has improved her knowledge of the issues, therefore improving the level of safety and protection of children in her care. She also agreed to clarify her procedures regarding non admission of sick children. She has developed a sick child policy which ensures that parents are clear and that children are protected from infections.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 the contents of the first aid kit are regularly checked and replenished
- ensure that the fire blanket in the kitchen is easily accessible.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk