

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 312452 |
| Inspection date | 03 April 2007 |
| Inspector | Cathryn Parry |
| 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 1999. She lives with her husband and her two children aged 11 and 15 years. They live in the residential area of Jarrow in Tyne and Wear. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed yard for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time and is currently minding four children. She also cares for children aged over eight years. The childminder has a registered assistant to care for children in case of an emergency. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a cat, a guinea pig and tropical fish.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children can participate fully in activities as the premises and equipment are very clean. The childminder ensures that toys which are played with are washed regularly. Children are learning

good personal hygiene through consistent routines, such as using paper tissues for blowing noses and putting their hands over their mouths when they cough. This is complemented with posters in the bathroom to remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet. Comprehensive policies, very good relationships with parents and carers and relevant training, ensure individual children are cared for well, should they become ill. Consequently, the risk of cross-infection is reduced.

Children flourish as they access very good opportunities for physical play, including the use of climbing equipment in the park. They explore, test and develop physical control, as they partake in music and movement activities and yoga. Children are active or restful through choice and babies sleep in line with their individual needs. The childminder has completed a food hygiene course, which has a positive impact on the methods used to prepare, cook and serve meals. Children thrive, as the childminder provides generally healthy and nutritional meals and snacks. She considers how to encourage children to adopt healthy lifestyles, for instance, by offering fruit most days. Children have regular drinks of water or diluted fresh juice, which quenches their thirst and benefits their health. Older children help themselves to drinks, which promotes independence. All relevant documentation with regard to health, including specific dietary needs and consent forms, is in place and up-to-date. This positively safeguards children's well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are made welcoming and friendly to children and parents. Large windows in the sitting room enable children to benefit from natural light whilst they play indoors. Children are safeguarded well as the childminder's home is secure at all times. This is supplemented with effective procedures for adults collecting children, including the use of passwords, if needed. All children are able to explore safely, using well maintained resources. These are bought from reputable suppliers and are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children attending. Those who go on outings are kept safe as the childminder is vigilant and uses age-appropriate restraints. She encourages good practice, such as holding hands and staying together.

Children's knowledge of personal safety is encouraged by gentle reminders regarding road safety and occasional fire drill practises. This positively contributes to children developing a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe. They are provided with good levels of adult supervision. Consequently, they take appropriate risks as part of their development. All safety equipment is in place reducing the risk of accidents. This includes electrical socket covers and a fire blanket. Smoke detectors on each floor are tested regularly, with a written log of the checks being kept. The childminder has attended relevant child protection training and demonstrates a sound understanding of associated issues. All required procedures and documentation are in place, including risk assessments. This has a positive impact on ensuring children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a very wide range of resources and activities, which the children eagerly participate in. These include dressing up, sharing books and playing age-appropriate games, such as stacking games for older children. A very good balance of child-centred and

adult-led experiences ensures suitable challenge for the children's ages and stages of development. The childminder demonstrates a very good understanding of the need for children to have opportunities to play independently and with others, sometimes with little adult intervention. Effective use is made of the local area giving children a breadth of opportunities, including trips to the farm. Activities are extended, for instance, collecting leaves and pine cones on a nature walk. This inspires children to be creative and increases their knowledge of the natural world. The childminder links in with children's individual interests, for instance, she provides a range of toy dinosaurs to encourage a child's knowledge in this area. Initial training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework has been attended by the childminder. She is starting to record children's progress in line with this, which has a positive impact on activities and experiences provided. However, achievements are not dated. Consequently, a clear picture of individual progress is not easily seen.

Children delight in using their imagination as they run with scarves outside and pretend to be butterflies. Their manipulative skills are promoted as they weave with different materials. Children's communication skills are fostered well, with the effective use of facial expression and tone with babies. This results in good interactions between children and the childminder. Children's mathematical thinking is encouraged as they weigh ingredients for baking, use stacking toys and numerical jigsaws. Resources are carefully chosen, including a range of two and three dimensional shapes for children to explore. Babies' interest is encouraged through a wide variety of man-made and natural resources. All children participate in a range of creative activities, which promotes their coordination and self-expression whilst having fun.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A short induction period is encouraged to enable children to settle into the childminding environment. This is complemented with comprehensive written information on the service provided. Children feel a sense of belonging, due to the childminder's friendly and approachable disposition. Her confident approach to equal opportunities actively contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. The children have access to a wide selection of resources, including books, dolls and paper figures showing positive images of people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those from different ethnic backgrounds. Children's awareness and understanding of difference is further promoted through the celebration of festivals from around the world. The childminder has some experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and demonstrates a very positive attitude to including all children. She has liaised with other professionals, including a speech therapist and attended training in Makaton sign language. This has a positive impact on all children making progress.

Consistent encouragement ensures children are developing a good knowledge of what is right and wrong. The childminder shows a sound knowledge of behaviour management, giving good examples of how she would approach a variety of situations for children of different ages. Very good relationships with parents and carers are highly beneficial to the continuity of care that the children receive. Detailed information is shared with parents and carers on a daily basis, including written diary sheets for children aged under three years.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder, her assistant and her husband, have been suitably vetted to ensure children are safeguarded well. She is aware of her current registration restrictions and adheres to them. This has a positive impact on children's safety. The childminder's ongoing commitment to training has a significantly positive impact on the high quality of care provided. She shows a raised awareness of the effect of activities and experiences on children's overall development. All legally required documentation is in place and implemented well. This positively contributes to children's overall well-being.

Children's play opportunities are maximised through the effective organisation of space, time and resources. The dining room is used to store the wide range of resources. It also has a large table, which children use for creative play and meal times. The sitting room has sufficient free floor space for babies to practise becoming mobile. Low-level storage of resources encourages free choice and independence.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the provider was asked to keep appropriate signed consent forms for transporting children in vehicles and to make sure that plastic bags, drains and blind cords are inaccessible to children. Written consent forms are now in place and signed by parents and carers. Plastic bags, drains and blind cords have been made inaccessible to children. This has a positive impact on their well-being.

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 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):

- continue to develop the recording of children's progress.

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