

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313961
Inspection date	31 May 2007
Inspector	Judith Ann 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 1999. She lives with her partner and two adult children, in a house in South Stanley, close to the town centre. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the locality, as well as shops and local amenities.

The ground floor areas of the home are used for childminding purposes. Toilet and hand washing facilities are also on the ground floor. Minded children do not access first floor rooms. There is an enclosed rear paved garden available for outdoor play activities. There are currently three children on roll.

The family have three pet dogs and three cats that live in the home.

The childminder takes children to and from school and pre-school on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing with appropriate, well maintained toys. The childminder's cleaning routines helps children to be healthy; regular cleaning ensures a clean floor for babies and children to play. Older children are helped to establish suitable personal hygiene routines through being encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as after being to the toilet. Parents are contacted and children collected should they become ill which ensures that they are well cared for and remaining children are not at risk of infection. The childminder provides meals for the children in her care. The menus, which are shared with parents, offer limited healthy options and consist of such foods as smiley faces, chips, fish fingers, chicken nuggets and yoghurt. This has a detrimental effect on children's health as they are not given sufficient opportunity to eat healthily and are not learning about healthy eating. Suitable drinks are offered on a regular basis which prevents children from becoming dehydrated.

Accident and medication books are in place and the childminder has a suitable first aid kit that is safely stored. However, medication records are not kept up to date which has a negative impact on children's health as parents do not have an accurate record of medications administered. The childminder has a relevant and current first aid certificate which means that children are protected in the event of an emergency. Written records of minor accidents have not been kept, the childminder informs parents verbally which enables continuity of care. Although the childminder does have accident records, these are only used for accidents requiring medical attention.

Satisfactory opportunities for physical play and exercise are part of the daily routine as the childminder walks to and from school with the children and regularly visits the local park. The small enclosed rear paved garden is also used for play but children's health is not fully safeguarded as the family pets are toileted there. However, the childminder stated that she takes steps to keep the children safe by regularly disinfecting and cleaning the paved area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, welcoming environment. The rooms have good natural light and adequate space for play. The front door is kept locked and the childminder closely supervises the children allowing them free movement through the ground floor of the house and out into the garden for outdoor play. When the back door is open to allow children to use the rear garden, the garden gate is closed with a high latch thus ensuring their safety. The children play in the living room where there is adequate floor space to use a range of toys that are appropriate for their development.

The childminder protects children from accidental injury both indoors and out as she visually checks the play areas. The kitchen is clean and safe for children as they are closely supervised and knives and cleaning materials are kept out of reach or in locked cupboards. All fire safety equipment is in place, for example, smoke alarms fitted both up and downstairs and a fire blanket in the kitchen. The childminder understands the signs and symptoms of child abuse. She has the necessary contact details for referral of any concerns and understands her responsibility to protect children. This contributes to the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has built up caring relationships with the minded children. She plays on the floor with them showing an interest in what they do. Children benefit as she participates in their games, such as throwing and catching a ball. She plans art and craft activities for the children to encourage their imagination. For instance, they make necklaces and jewellery boxes from the good quality resources provided. When involved in this art activity, she unobtrusively provides good support for younger children allowing them to feel a sense of achievement in what they do.

All children are encouraged to be involved in activities, for example, when playing skittles, all children are taking part and learning to share and take turns. The childminder encourages their mathematical development as they count together and she helps them to understand clockwise and anti-clockwise as they take turns in a game on the floor. Children are confident in their relationship with the childminder and will ask for her help with their activities. They are able to choose toys and activities from the wide range available. Although these are stored in a large cupboard, the childminder takes steps to provide the children with independent choice by putting out the toys at a low level each morning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the childminder's home. She knows the children well and understands their likes and dislikes, which enables her to provide activities that they will enjoy. The childminder has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and states that she would provide an inclusive environment, adapting activities if necessary. The childminder uses a variety of strategies to encourage good behaviour. She praises children, encourages sharing and turn taking by being involved in the children's games. She understands the need for age appropriate approaches to behaviour management, for example, negotiation and praise with older children, and distracting younger children. The children are generally well behaved and inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly.

Time is taken each day to discuss the children's needs with each parent which contributes to their continuity of care. The childminder is friendly and helpful towards parents which helps to build positive relationships with them and this benefits the children in her care. Discussion with parents at the onset of minding allows the childminder to care for children following their routines from home. This enables the childminder to care for the children effectively. Appropriate written information about the provision is shared with parents, such as written policies on behaviour and complaints. The childminder has sought feedback from parents and all the comments are positive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder's home is well organised to support play opportunities and is child friendly. Children are able to choose toys as these are organised to be accessible and are displayed at a low level; this encourages their independence. The childminder organises her time well to be able to play with the children throughout the day which helps their progress and development. Opportunities for developing social skills are built into the routine as the childminder organises outings to the local park.

All the necessary documentation is in place, although some records are not up to date. The children's records are stored appropriately for confidentiality and are available for inspection.

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 ensure that the first aid course undertaken included training in first aid for infants and young children. The childminder now has a current and relevant first aid qualification so children are protected in the event of an emergency. She was also asked to ensure that children have access to an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. There has been some progress in that the childminder has provided a range of resources including books and small world toys which increases children's awareness of difference and a wider world.

Previously, outing permission had not been obtained, the sick children procedure was not shared with parents, and the child protection procedure was unclear. The childminder has addressed these issues through making written policy statements available to parents and is clear about the child protection procedure. The children's welfare is now safeguarded and children are protected from cross infection.

The childminder was also required to improve health procedures by keeping a written record, signed by parents, of all accidents to children. Limited progress has been made with regard to recording accidents. The childminder now has accident report forms available but has not yet recorded any minor accidents which has a negative impact on children's health. A recommendation to ensure that unprotected low level glass in the audio unit did not pose a risk to children has been addressed as the audio unit has been removed so children are now protected from this hazard.

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):

- keep a written record of all accidents to children

- maintain up to date medication records
- maintain children's health and safety in the enclosed rear yard with regard to toileting the family pets.

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