

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	316936
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Valerie Block
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1998. She lives with her two children aged 11 and eight years in the centre of Whitehaven, Cumbria. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding as well as an upstairs bathroom and two bedrooms. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five and two children of school age. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She also has use of a car. The childminder attends local children's groups. The family has a hamster and two rabbits.

She is a member of an approved childminding network.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They clearly understand that they must wash their hands after using the toilet and understand this is to stop them feeling ill. When they leave the toilet without remembering to wash their hands the childminder reminds them and they happily return to do so. The childminder has encouraged them to use soap as she has provided a child-friendly soap dispenser in the shape of a frog that the children enjoy using.

The childminder ensures the children's ongoing good health as she has safe procedures in place to reduce cross-contamination. She has written policies in place explaining her procedures for parents' information. These include procedures to ensure that children cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing as well as hygienic nappy changing procedures.

Children receive a good amount of regular exercise and fresh air when in the childminder's care and so become healthy.

Children are for the most part well nourished as the childminder provides a healthy diet that takes good account of parents' wishes and children's dietary needs. She has a policy that describes healthy sample menus and describes how food is healthily prepared. For example, she uses salt sparingly and provides sugar-free drinks. Water is currently only available in the kitchen and is not sufficiently accessible to children, so reducing their opportunities to take regular drinks throughout the day and to develop independent self-care skills.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a home where risks are identified and minimised. This means that they are able to move around safely, freely and independently. There are several safety gates in place to ensure children's safety and security. Children are kept very safe when in the car as the childminder ensures that she has all the suitable car seats for the children and keeps the car in good order. Children are well supervised at all times to ensure their safety and are mainly on the ground floor so ensuring they are within good sight and hearing of the childminder.

When outside the childminder has robust methods to ensure children's safety. She takes children's details with her when outside of the home in case of emergency. The childminder helps children to understand how to keep themselves safe when outside, teaching them about the green cross code and so they start to learn to take responsibility for their own safety.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards and are age-appropriate.

She has a wealth of information about safety issues such as fire safety. She has invited the fire officer to her home to give advice regarding escaping from the house in the event of a fire. She has a detailed fire evacuation plan to also ensure children's safety.

The childminder has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has a very secure understanding of the procedures to follow should she be

concerned about a child's welfare. She has attended courses in safeguarding children and this has increased her skills and understanding of this area of work.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's house. They make themselves at home and show affection for the childminder and her family. They relate well to each other and socialise with other children through regular attendance at local children's groups.

Children become independent as they choose between a good amount and variety of toys, books and activities. The childminder ensures that younger children have suitable play opportunities and where possible join in activities with older children in a supported way. The childminder is in the early stages of using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. She plans activities for children using themes, adapting activities to suit children's varying ages. Currently the theme is farm animals. The childminder is unsure as to how to relate themes to the areas of learning in a systematic way and of how to relate planning to children's learning needs. She has arranged to attend courses to help her improve her practice in these areas.

Young children colour in cut out pictures of animals that they will later make into puppets and together they will put on a puppet show. Children point out the duck puppets on the wall that they made earlier and sing a song about counting ducks at a pond, remembering the activity with pleasure. They enjoy looking at the frieze the childminder has made using the children's work following this event.

Children cuddle into the childminder later to hear a favourite book and talk to the childminder about the story and make connections to their own experiences and home life. Children, therefore, become interested in books and develop their conversational skills and confidence.

The needs of school-aged children returning from school are well understood and the childminder organises a good choice of age-appropriate activities for them whilst recognising their need to relax after school.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a good range of play resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and to increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Posters welcoming people from different races and cultures are displayed showing a positive regard for diversity. The childminder demonstrates an anti-discriminatory attitude and welcomes families from diverse backgrounds.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are known and the childminder follows parents' wishes and identified children's needs. The childminder has a positive behaviour management strategy where children are encouraged to behave well. Children work together to help tidy up when asked to do so, showing concern for others.

The childminder has a good understanding of the need to work closely with parents and parents are very happy with the service they receive. The childminder is very interested in the views of parents and regularly gives out questionnaires to assess parents' views of her service, with the intent to improve practice and communicate well with parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The children feel at home and are at ease with their environment. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The childminder has organised the available space very well to ensure that children are usually on the ground floor and within her sight or hearing, to ensure their safety and well-being. Children's safety is well met by the childminder being mindful of the need to ensure children are supervised appropriately and that they are in the company of suitable persons.

She ensures children are well cared for and settled by receiving a good amount of information from parents and discussing their children's needs and progress regularly with them. Records are very well kept and shared with parents to ensure a good standard of care for children.

The childminder has a good amount of experience working with children and has a recognised early years qualification. She has undertaken a very good amount of other training in many different areas, such as caring for children with additional needs and is able to use makaton to communicate with children with disabilities.

She rigorously evaluates her practice and training needs and diligently arranges training well in advance so that parents can make suitable arrangements for their children. She is a member of a childminding network and receives visits from the network to appraise her work, so helping her to improve her practice. She is also in contact with other childminders and they regularly discuss good working practice and work issues. She keeps very well up to date with new government guidance and is currently becoming familiar with the Early Years Foundation Stage.

She has produced an excellent amount of policies and procedures having researched the outcomes for children very thoroughly and makes these available to parents. This means that parents are well informed about her practice and that the childminder provides a very well organised setting for the benefit of the children who attend.

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 it was agreed that the registration certificate be displayed in full. This certificate is now displayed so that parents can see it and so the registration regulation is met.

## **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 activity planning to ensure that play opportunities are provided that help children develop their emotional, social and intellectual capabilities
- improve the accessibility of fresh drinking water for children to drink throughout the day.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)