

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401599
Inspection date	14 May 2007
Inspector	Shirley Peart
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 2000. She lives with her partner on the outskirts of Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The home is situated close to the local school, shops and the village of Ponteland. The childminder occasionally works with her partner, who is also an assistant. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding as it is all on one level and there is a communal grassed area available, which is used for outdoor play under supervision.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding five children under five years, four children over five years and four children aged eight years and over, mainly on a part-time, varied basis.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a lovely and clean, warm and welcoming home. Younger pre-school children are beginning to understand and practice their own self-care tasks, as they attempt to roll up their sleeves for a gluing activity. Older pre-school children are adept at managing this and also visit the bathroom independently. Space is available within the home for children to nap quietly in their buggies and privacy and dignity is maintained well, when children's nappies need changing.

Suitable documentation is in place regarding administration of medication, accident recording and emergency consent. The childminder and the assistant hold first aid certificates, a first aid box is available and children do not attend if they are ill. Parents are also made well aware of the childminders sickness policy. This ensures that children's health needs are well met.

Children enjoy snacks of fresh fruit, which is very well prepared for them and they help themselves to their drinks in their suitable cups and beakers. Sample menus are in place, which contain wholesome foods, such as pasta, meat dishes, fresh vegetables and rice. The assistant is a trained chef, so is well aware of providing suitable food for the children. The childminder gathers all relevant information on children's likes, dislikes and allergies, which are documented on registration forms. This ensures that their nutritional needs are successfully met.

Children get plenty of fresh air and exercise, which promotes their physical development well and contributes to a healthy lifestyle. For example, they regularly walk to school and nursery, are taken on regular outings or play outside in the communal gardens under supervision. They enjoy playing on small bikes, trucks, with balls or in the paddling pool.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder uses the space available within her home to benefit the children. For example, there is a designated play room where children's toys and craft materials are well stored, children's art work and information for parents is also very well displayed. Children choose where they want to play, everything is on the ground floor and there are plenty of low level tables, benches and chairs for them to sit at meals or for their activities.

Toys and equipment are very good. They are age appropriate, clean, well maintained and some diverse equipment is available, such as small world figures with walking sticks. Some toys are easily accessible for the children and the childminder gets out other toys and materials for them when necessary.

The environment is mainly safe and secure for the children. For example, doors are locked and safety equipment is available and used effectively, such as a fire guard, electrical socket covers, smoke detectors and fire blanket. However, the blind cords are within children's reach. Her emergency evacuation procedure is displayed and all children attending, practice the fire drill. Children are adequately protected when they are out and about. For example, she talks to the children about road safety and younger children are either strapped into buggies or safety wrist straps are used.

Suitable information and procedures are in place regarding child protection. The childminder and the assistant have carried out further training and understand their role and responsibility in child protection matters, which ensures that children's welfare is well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled. They eagerly approach their activities and state clearly what they are going to do. They concentrate extremely well on their activities. For example, they look at and talk about the catalogue pictures of children playing, demonstrate a keen interest in the scrap book of photographs from visits that they have been on and show determination when aiming to complete the jigsaws. They use small tools, such as scissors and glue spreaders with excellent control and talk confidently about the pictures and what they see. Children are fascinated as they go to the window to watch the dog running about in the communal garden. They excitedly shout out the dogs name and the childminder assistant builds on this interest by taking the children outside for a closer look.

Children are highly animated as they clearly talk about and explain what they do at the childminder's home, such as playing outside and blowing bubbles. Older pre-school children show care and concern for younger children as they explain why they cannot go outside because it is wet. They are involved in some very good activities and outings that assist their all round development very well, such as visits to the beach, children's science centres and steam powered railway depot.

The childminder and assistant are highly involved and show a keen interest in what the children do and say. They hold conversations with them and listen attentively, which encourages children's language development very well. Therefore, children thoroughly enjoy their time within the setting and clearly enjoy their activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder is aware of the children's individual needs and meets these exceptionally well. She finds out relevant information from the parents and this is clearly documented. Children celebrate their birthdays, different festivals and use relevant community facilities well, so that they gain a good awareness of themselves and their environment. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The home is suitable, for example, care and facilities are all available on one level.

The childminder and the assistant manage the children's behaviour successfully, so that they gain a good understanding of right from wrong. The childminder is firm but fair, copes with temper tantrums in a calm manner and offers full explanations of why she does not want children to do something, such as taking scissors away from the table. Children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement, therefore they are very proud of their achievements. For example, they shout 'Hooray' and clap their hands on successful completion of the jigsaws.

Partnership with parents is very good. They are given a comprehensive leaflet which clearly sets out the childminder's role. She has sent feedback forms out to the parents and has received some reference letters. All were highly positive and parents are more than happy with the care that their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder is committed to providing high quality childcare. She has completed relevant training, such as Developing Childminding Practice, 'Birth to three matters' framework, food hygiene and has achieved the National Childminding Association, Quality First certificate. This ensures that children are cared for by a knowledgeable, very well trained and competent childminder.

She plans children's activities very well and has a very good routine. This includes attendance at regular groups and childminder 'drop ins,' which ensures that children's social skills and enjoyment is enhanced very well. She is a popular and busy childminder with a number of children on roll. She is very well supported by her partner, who is also her assistant. Therefore, adult-child ratios are good and children receive lots of attention, which positively supports their learning and development.

Documentation, policies and procedures are all in place and effectively linked to the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. A comprehensive file is in place which is available for parents to view, they are also given copies of her policies and procedures so that they are aware of how she promotes children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement.

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 requested to keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children and to request written permission from parents for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder's recording of the above issues is now very good and further supports children's welfare and safety.

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 complaint 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):

- ensure that blind cords are out of children's reach.

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