

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403040
Inspection date	06 June 2007
Inspector	Jasmin Myles-Wilson
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 1995 and lives with her husband and two teenage children in their terraced house in the centre of Bedlington, Northumberland. The whole ground floor and the upstairs bathroom is used for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed front garden and back yard available for outdoor play. Local amenities and public transport systems are within a short walking distance.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. At present, she is minding three children aged under five years on various days and at various times. She also cares for three children aged under eight years before and after school. The childminder walks to take and collect children from the local first school. The family pet is a budgie.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and hygiene is satisfactorily promoted through a variety of ways, such as regular exercise, rest and daily routines. They begin to develop an understanding of keeping themselves healthy. For example, children tell their babies they need to sleep to give them energy, then a little conversation starts as the childminder talks with children about having a good amount of sleep to raise their energy levels. Children have sufficient opportunities to access fresh air and enjoy physical activities, such as going for walks or playing on the park.

The spread of infection and disease is reduced by the childminder keeping the premises clean and not allowing very sick children to attend. Children receive appropriate care and attention when they are ill or sustain injuries as the childminder has sufficient knowledge to deal appropriately with them as she is trained in first aid. She also has consent to seek emergency treatment or medical advice for all children attending the provision. The accident and medication book do not have any entries but the childminder is secure in her knowledge of what to record and to obtain consent for any medication administered.

Children's dietary needs are considered and met satisfactorily as the childminder and parents work together. When appropriate, babies are given the space and time to become independent while feeding themselves and the childminder makes herself available to assist them as needed. The childminder is trained in basic food hygiene and provides healthy foods for the children which they enjoy, such as fruit, mince, vegetables and yoghurts. Drinks are accessible to children throughout the day. Each child has their own cup and can easily access it.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder ensures that her home is welcoming to children. The home is maintained well and the space is appropriately organised so playing children are kept safe. Children have access to a varied range of activities and resources which they select what to do from activities already set out. The resources cover all aspects of children's development for both inside and outside play. For example, they do outdoor energetic and physical play, such as riding bikes, or they do quieter activities using their imagination, such as role play. Suitable procedures are in place to check resources are maintained throughout the week or as needed, to ensure safety and hygiene for children.

The childminder has a sufficient level of understanding regarding potential dangers to children and has appropriate strategies in place that help to minimise risks to children. For example, when using a buggy to transport young children, appropriate restraints are used. However, the bathroom lock is unsafe. Children develop their understanding of safety issues through conversations with the childminder and practising escaping from the building in an emergency as a play activity. Children's safety is priority, therefore, procedures are in place to protect them. The childminder is confident in her knowledge of what to do and who to contact in the event of suspected abuse, therefore, children are safeguarded and their welfare is protected. However, the childminder has a little difficulty in stating recognised signs, symptoms and types of abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder meets children's individual needs through the knowledge she gains from observing the children and obtaining information from the parents. Children respond well to appropriate physical contact from the childminder, such as cuddles and hugs, maintaining eye contact and smiling, which results in children being happy and settled. They enjoy the company of the childminder and have developed warm and caring relationships. Children have opportunities to develop in confidence and explore the environment. They mainly make decisions about what they want to do from the activities set out which helps in developing their independence. The childminder is close by to support children in their play when needed, for example, when children struggle to fit toy pieces together, she asks children if she can help them, and with their agreement she then proceeds to give them assistance.

Children relate well to each other and engage in a range of activities which they are interested in and enjoy, such as baking, doing jigsaw puzzles, using their imagination in role play. For example, children pretend to mash potatoes with a potato masher as part of a meal they are providing for the childminder. Children are developing good language and communication skills through a variety of activities and through the childminder using good questioning techniques, such as when children are playing, the childminder is close by asking them questions about what they are doing to develop their thinking and play. For example, as children play with the dolls the childminder asks them what their babies are doing and children respond 'going to bed'. Young children's individual routine and parental wishes are respected. For example, young children go to sleep whenever they are ready to and begin to develop an understanding of their basic needs as the childminder carries out parental wishes, such as toilet training.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has sufficient understanding of equality and diversity and treats all children as individual and with equal concern, assisting them whenever necessary. Although all children have access to toys and equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development, the provision of resources and activities that promote positive images of culture and abilities are limited. Therefore, children's appreciation of diversity within their community or the wider world is not fully encouraged. Children respond well to praise and are encouraged to become more independent and develop their confidence.

Children learn how to display positive behaviour through the childminder using appropriate boundaries and strategies. They also learn what behaviour is acceptable and what is not, for example, children are gently reminded that they have to share when they want toys which someone else has.

Partnerships with parents are established and developed through the childminder keeping parents informed of the service and their children. The childminder communicates appropriately with parents which enables them to share information and concerns. Parents are happy and have confidence in the childminder's ability to follow their wishes, therefore, children's individual needs are sufficiently met. Children benefit from this partnership as they receive continuity of care and feel settled.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an appropriately organised environment. They have safe access to areas that are designated to them and are supervised at all times. Children receive appropriate care and attention as the childminder spends sufficient time with them and has sufficient knowledge and experience.

The childminder understands the need to maintain and keep documentation. Documentation is organised, easily accessible and confidentially stored. The childminder has all relevant and required documentation in place, therefore, children benefit from this as the childminder cares for them appropriately. She is aware of what Ofsted expects of her, for example, she realises her responsibility is to inform Ofsted when there are any significant changes or events.

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 recommended that good hygiene practices regarding hand washing are put in place and that parents should be notified about the procedure for ill or infectious children. It was also recommended that children have access to an appropriate range of toys and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Children are now developing appropriate hygiene practices through washing their hands as part of their routine before eating. Parents are now informed of the procedure for ill or infectious children, therefore, children are sufficiently protected from the risk of becoming infected. Children are beginning to develop knowledge and understanding of the wider world as they now have access to toys and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, however, this needs further improvement.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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):

- develop your knowledge and understanding of child protection issues
- ensure bathroom lock is made inaccessible to children
- further develop the range of activities and resources for children that promote equality and diversity.

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