

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403131
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst

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 has been registered since 1999. She lives with her husband and two adult children in the semi-rural village of Corbridge. There are shops, schools and parks close by.

Minded children have access to the whole of the ground floor. There is also an enclosed rear garden for their use. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered to provide care for six children at any one time and is currently caring for seven children on a full and part-time basis. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a warm, very clean environment where they learn about the importance of personal hygiene. The children learn to wash their hands before eating and measures to prevent cross contamination in the bathroom are particularly good. First aid training

is kept up to date which enables the childminder to act in children's best interests to safeguard their health. All relevant records are in place for accidents and the administration of medication to protect children. However, parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment has not been obtained.

The children develop a positive approach to being active in the outdoors. They have great fun on their river walks where they play 'pooh sticks', and they develop their physical skills on the good range of equipment in the garden or on the various outings to parks and leisure amenities. This promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Children are helped to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy. The childminder talks to them about fruit being good for them. They enjoy wholesome, nutritious meals which are freshly prepared. The children often help to prepare either their snack or lunch by visiting the local shop to select and buy the produce. Children are not served processed food and not given food and drinks with high levels of artificial additives and sugar.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children can play freely in the very family-friendly environment because the childminder identifies potential hazards in the home and minimises them in relation to the age group of the children attending. Supervision of children is vigilant but not intrusive. The childminder has devised ways for the children to learn about their own safety. For example, the older children are very confident in the rules for walking to and from school and the younger ones learn to hold the handle of the buggy or the childminder's hand. The childminder ensures that fire precautions, such as smoke alarms, fire blanket and carbon monoxide detectors, are in place to further safeguard children. The children also know how to leave the premises in an emergency because the childminder talks to them about this.

Children use a range of safe and well maintained toys which are suitable to meet their developing needs and stimulate interest. They are well organised to encourage children's independent access so they can make decisions about their play and learning. The childminder monitors and supervises children's choice of toys carefully to make sure that they are safe and appropriate for their ages and stage of development.

The childminder is confident about her responsibility to the children in relation to safeguarding their welfare. She keeps all the necessary local and national guidance on file for advice should she need it and has a good awareness of the content.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are relaxed and confident in the homely childminding environment and they enjoy their time with the childminder and her family. They readily snuggle in for a cuddle as they prepare for a story to be read to them. They chat happily to the childminder and her family, holding lengthy conversation about recent outings and family trips. The childminder uses conversational questioning techniques well to help young children to think. This is very effective in supporting their intellectual capabilities. She uses this approach successfully to aid young children's mathematical development. For example, she casually enquires how many matching cards are left and how many are needed to fill the card. Consequently, the children count very

well. Her developing understanding of how young children learn through working things out for themselves also enhances their development.

Older children express themselves in their art and craft work. There are craft materials and paints available but the children mainly enjoy drawing after school or playing football in the garden. Sometimes the children like to relax as they make models, cut and glue. This approach means that all children can take part at their own pace and level.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder gets to know the children and their families very well and she talks fondly about their individual needs and dispositions. She talks to the parents daily about their children's needs and is attentive to the children as they chat to her on the way to and from school. This helps the children to feel valued and respected and contributes to the warm, homely environment and it ensures that the children's individual needs are easily met. The pleasant environment and the clear explanations means also that the children are relaxed, confident and behave very well. The children demonstrate their acceptance of diversity in the wider community by happily choosing from a good range of equipment showing positive images of others.

The childminder's clear and consistent expectations of children and trust in their abilities helps to increase their self-confidence and shows they are appreciated. Their self-esteem is developed as they receive regular praise and encouragement for their efforts. The childminder provides a good role model for children by being calm and polite. The children respond well to the childminder and are secure and happy in her care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable, happy and relaxed with the childminder. Space, resources and equipment are organised effectively to meet the children's needs. They experience individual attention with the childminder helping them to develop positive relationships. The childminder complies with the conditions of her registration and has a strong sense of responsibility towards the children in her care to ensure their well-being. She keeps abreast of current issues in childcare by reading the 'Who Minds' magazine and through the childminding support group.

The childminder maintains most of the required records and documentation to provide a safe and efficient service. The effective verbal discussion the childminder has with parents means children are supported and cared for appropriately.

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 all household members over 16 years have appropriate clearances. The childminder clearly understands her responsibility relating to this and has ensured that all household members are suitably vetted. This ensures that children's overall safety is well protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

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 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):

- seek permission from parents for emergency medical treatment.

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