

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305503
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Inspector	Sharon Greener
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 1992. She lives with her two adult daughters and son aged 16 years in the Fulwell area of Sunderland. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under eight years. One child attends on a full-time basis and the other on a part-time basis. The childminder walks children to the local toddler groups that she attends twice each week. The family has a pet cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The rooms used for childminding purposes are clean and very well maintained. The childminder presents as a positive role model to the children and promotes good hygiene practices. For example, children hand wash before eating, after using the toilet and following creative or outdoor play. The childminder has a clear understanding of related policies and procedures,

such as caring for a sick child, nappy changing and the administration of medication. These procedures are used very well to help to promote and preserve the children's health and well-being.

The childminder acknowledges the benefits of fresh air and exercise for children. She provides regular opportunities for physical play both indoors and outdoors. Children are able to play in the garden and are frequent visitors to local parks, green areas and the beach. A satisfactory selection of equipment is provided to support and enhance children's physical development, such as tricycles, a rocker, bats, balls, a basketball hoop and sit-and-rides for younger children. The childminder also provides physical play indoors, for example, by encouraging the children to do bending and stretching exercises with her which they enjoy. Children are given lots of encouragement and praise by the childminder. They are able to test their abilities and to develop their physical skills in a very supportive environment. All children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual needs. This helps to promote and nurture their physical development and well-being.

The childminder is flexible in relation to catering arrangements and works in harmony with parents and carers to ensure that children's individual dietary requirements are very well met. She discusses in detail with parents and carers children's needs, and relevant information is recorded. The childminder fully understands the importance of adhering to the dietary wishes of parents and carers, whether for medical, cultural or religious reasons or their lifestyle choices. She has completed training in respect of basic food and hygiene. Babies and very young children are fed in keeping with their individual routines. The childminder shows a very good understanding of the need to ensure that children are suitably nourished. She encourages children to eat a varied, healthy diet including fresh vegetables, fruit and fish. Children are offered appropriate drinks at regular intervals throughout the day. This helps promote and preserve their welfare.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has a very good understanding of relevant policies and procedures. She makes effective use of these to help remove or minimise risks to children. Childminding areas are very well maintained and used effectively to accommodate children's play. Suitable safety equipment is in place, such as socket covers, smoke detectors, a fireguard and a fire blanket. The childminder completes a visual risk assessment of the rooms and resources to be used before children's arrival each day. This process is ongoing throughout childminding hours and helps to maintain a safe environment for the children. Hazardous items, such as cleaning fluids, medication and sharp utensils, are stored beyond children's reach. Children are very closely supervised by the childminder as they move freely from room to room.

The childminder shows a good awareness of her responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and has completed related training. She explains her responsibility and the action she would take if she had a concern about a child's welfare to parents and carers during the induction process. A copy of the recommended child protection literature and the contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board are available for reference purposes. This helps to protect children from harm.

The childminder helps to raise children's awareness of danger and the need to preserve their own safety and that of others. She does this by presenting as a positive role model to the children and through talking to them about matters such as road safety and the need to stay

very close to her during outings. The childminder sets consistent boundaries for the children. The ground rules and the reasons for them are explained simply to them as appropriate to their age and level of understanding. When necessary ground rules are reinforced through gentle reminders from the childminder, such as the need to use toys appropriately and safely, children respond positively and this helps keep them safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder has a very good knowledge of the individual abilities and stages of development of the children she cares for. She is familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and uses this to support her practice and to help to enhance the learning and developmental progress of young children. She makes very good use of the space available to ensure that a broad variety of age appropriate activities and learning opportunities are available to children. These include creative, imaginative, cognitive and construction type play. For example, children enjoy looking at books, completing jigsaws, singing and collecting autumn leaves to make pictures.

A varied selection of resources and activities is easily accessible to children within the constraints of safety. This enables them to make their own choices about activities and nurtures independence skills. Resources are regularly changed to offer children variety and to keep them stimulated and interested. A good balance of adult-led activities, such as story telling, outings and some special art activities is included in the daily programme. Children are taken on frequent outing to places of interest, for example, to the local parks, the beach, the library and Monkwearmouth train station museum. During shopping trips, pictures of items are used as prompts to enable even very young children to help select the items needed. Younger children visit local toddler and carer groups twice a week. Such outings help to promote and enhance children's social skills and their knowledge and understanding of the local environment and the wider world.

The childminder discusses children's individual needs with parents and carers. She uses this information, her own observations of the children and discussion with them to plan developmentally suitable activities and learning experiences for them. The childminder ensures that children are very well supported and sufficiently challenged. For example, older children are actively encouraged to attend to their own personal needs, such as toileting. She builds strong, warm relationships with the children and they are very relaxed and at ease in her care. The childminder makes constant use of praise to recognise and celebrate children's achievements and abilities. For example, a young child beamed with pride when praised for their ability to name the different modes of transport pictured on a set of jigsaws. This helps to promote children's confidence and foster positive self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of equality of opportunity. A suitable selection of resources and activities are provided to help raise children's awareness of diversity. All children are encouraged to take part in a wide variety of activities. The childminder shows a suitable awareness of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The childminder has a very good understanding of behaviour management and has completed relevant training. She applies appropriate behaviour management strategies very well and has a calm and consistent manner. Distraction tactics are used effectively with very young children

and older children are given gentle reminders and explanations of the ground rules. For example, children are reminded to pick up unwanted toys from the floor so as to prevent an accident. Children respond very well and help to tidy toys away. The childminder makes effective use of praise to promote and reinforce children's good behaviour and they respond positively to her and are very well behaved.

The childminder works in harmony with parents and carers to introduce children to herself, her family and home. Parents and carers are asked to carry out several visits to her home with their children as part of the gradual induction of children into her care. Consequently, children settle very well. The childminder discusses her policies and procedures with parents and carers and a brief general written statement about her childminding service is shared with them. Pertinent information about the children is gleaned from parents and carers and recorded on each child's individual record before they are left in the childminder's sole care. Respective parents and carers have access to their child's records. They are asked to keep the childminder up-to-date with any relevant information that might impact upon the care of their child. This helps to ensure that children's changing needs continue to be effectively met and that they are cared for in keeping with the wishes of their parents and carers. Every three months the childminder writes to parents and carers seeking their feedback on the care of their children. Their written feedback is positive and they comment about the good quality of service provided and the childminder's caring and nurturing manner.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a very good understanding of policies and procedures. She makes effective use of them to ensure that children are very well cared for and that their individual needs are very well met. The required documentation is in place and is efficiently organised. This helps to support operational procedures. However, the method of recording details regarding accidents does not preserve confidentiality. The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate. This enables her to administer emergency first aid to children should the need arise and helps to promote children's welfare.

The registration certificate and Ofsted poster which includes a contact telephone number are displayed for the benefit of parents and carers. The childminder is committed to the continued development of her skills and good practice. This is shown through her willingness to seek out and complete relevant training. For example, she has successfully completed recent training regarding communicating with young children, creating a nurturing environment to support children's emotional and social development and supporting vulnerable children and their families.

The childminder makes very good use of the space available to facilitate children's play and learning. Children are able to self-select their own resources and make choices about their activities. This helps to promote and nurture their decision making and independence skills. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to consider developing written policies and information for parents and carers about the service provided.

A few key policies and other general information about the service offered are provided for the benefit of parents and carers. This helps to support partnerships with parents and carers.

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 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):

- ensure that the system used to record information about accidents preserves confidentiality.

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