

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305576
Inspection date	21 August 2007
Inspector	Judith Ann Hodgson

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 outstanding. 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 2000. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children and there are currently 10 children on roll. She lives with her husband, who may be used as an assistant, and their three children aged 15, 14 and eight years. They live in a mid-terrace house in the established residential area of High Barnes, Sunderland. The whole of the ground floor and the first floor toilet are available for childminding. There is an enclosed yard at the rear of the house for outdoor play.

The childminder is part of an approved childminding network, a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local childcare groups on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are welcomed into a very clean and well ordered home. They learn excellent hygiene routines that promote their individual development. They are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. The younger children have fun when they sing their hand washing song

with the childminder. She provides excellent support for them to effectively clean their hands. Children talk about getting rid of germs, they use paper towels to dry their hands and dispose of them safely which helps to prevent cross-infection. The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of how to prevent the risk of cross-infection as she follows meticulous routines when changing nappies, using gloves and wipes to prevent cross-contamination. Children's health is very well protected within an environment where the childminder has a clear understanding of emergency first aid and the procedure for administration of medication. Sick children are kept comfortable before being sent home, which helps to protect remaining children from infection.

Children grow and thrive as they learn about healthy choices in their diet. They are offered an excellent range of foods throughout the day, snacks such as fruit or toast and home cooked wholesome hot meals with fresh vegetables. Children's learning about healthy foods is consolidated as they are involved in growing vegetables such as tomatoes, sweetcorn and French beans. The childminder has sought training in nutrition for the under fives and devises varied menus of healthy, well balanced meals. She works closely with parents to ensure that they are fully involved in the choice of foods offered to the children. Children's independence is very effectively fostered as they are often involved in making their own food. They make pizzas and are encouraged to spread their own toast at snack time with sensitive support offered by the childminder to enable all children to take an active part. Children follow well established good routines for meal times which are enjoyed as social occasions where good manners are encouraged.

Children's physical development is very well promoted. There are excellent opportunities for children to explore their physical capabilities and have fun as they play in the attractive, well equipped yard. Children's large muscle development is encouraged as they use equipment such as slides, tunnels, tents and tricycles. The childminder is involved in the children's play, teaching physical skills such as rolling as they play with skittles. Children develop excellent knowledge of their environment as they are taken on outings to parks and to wildlife centres.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The home is warm and very welcoming, with comfortable adult sized and child sized furniture such as sofas and small tables and chairs. Children feel a sense of pride and belonging as up-to-date photographs of them engrossed in a wide variety of activities and experiences are displayed on the walls. Children's independence and developing interests are encouraged as indoor and outdoor resources are attractively displayed for them to choose freely. The childminder has very well thought out plans for making the most of the space, including the yard which is an inviting and safe place to play. Indoor space is organised to reflect different areas of interest such as a role play area, book corner and small tables and chairs for messy play. Children's welfare is enhanced as they are able to choose to rest or be active as the childminder provides quiet areas in the conservatory and living room and space for lively play in the playroom or outdoors. Children have free access to all areas of the ground floor. They move around as the childminder organises the setting in different ways, depending on the children attending. This ensures that they get the most from their time here. Children access an excellent, very wide range of exciting and stimulating toys and equipment that are suitable for the children's age and stage of development. Equipment is carefully stored to be accessible to children, on open shelving and in drawers. Children can help themselves or ask for larger items which are stored in sight. Safety devices on the higher drawers protect children as they minimise the risk of accidents.

Children are safeguarded through the childminder's excellent, proactive practice. She carries out risk assessments, implements any improvements identified and plans a review date. For example, the childminder identified a risk outdoors if children were to tumble, then had a soft play surface fitted to minimise the risk of injury from physical play. All external doors are locked and the front door has closed circuit television to ensure that children's security is maintained at all times. The childminder further promotes children's safety through well planned activities to help them to learn to be responsible for their own safety. For example, the childminder plans a week of road safety activities during the school holidays so that all children can be involved.

Children are protected in the event of a fire as they are involved in regular, documented fire drills and the emergency evacuation plan is displayed and shared with parents. Children's overall well-being is safeguarded because the childminder has a very good understanding of the child protection procedures and how to implement these when necessary. She knows how to recognise the symptoms of child abuse and neglect and is confident in implementing the procedure should there be a cause for concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is passionate about helping each child to enjoy their time and fulfil their potential. Children are settled and extremely happy as they have fun and enjoy exploring the very wide range of toys provided in the playroom and garden. Children benefit from the childminder's careful planning which is itemised on a whiteboard in the playroom. Activities are changed frequently to maintain freshness and promote the children's interests. The childminder maintains excellent interaction with the children as she sits on the floor to become involved in their games such as small world games and role play. She plays skittles in the yard, encouraging children to count to keep the score. She chats to the children and sensitively intervenes in their activities to extend their learning. For example, when children are playing with giant pasta tubes and coloured pens she invites them to listen to the sound made by the pens. The children listen, eyes wide open with delight, then try the activity for themselves, which they do eagerly. Good support offered by the childminder enhances the children's play as she encourages them in their achievements. For example, when young children are climbing the slide steps outdoors she offers enthusiastic praise, helping them to develop a sense of pride.

Their imaginative skills are fostered through playing with a pretend kitchen, small world toys and dressing up outfits. Children learn about nature as they are involved in planting seeds. They grow grass and sunflowers as well as vegetables for the table. Communication skills are given a high priority and the childminder is skilled in talking and listening to children, repeating words and phrases to encourage new vocabulary. Children are confident and have good self-esteem because the childminder has a lovely manner, listens carefully to what they have to say and responds appropriately. Children's emotional well-being and sense of attachment are exceptionally well fostered through close and warm interaction with the childminder. They share cuddles, smiles and spontaneous gestures of affection.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Every child is very warmly welcomed and actively included by the childminder. They have excellent opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world. The childminder plans

activities where the children focus on a particular culture. For example, planned activities during Diwali enable the children to look at traditions, recipes and dress. Children have access in everyday play activities to high quality resources such as puzzles, books and small world figures that reflect a wide range of positive images of society. This increases their awareness of diversity in society. The childminder has a very positive attitude to caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The childminder works closely with parents to enable her to effectively support individual children and their families. She has attended training to enhance her knowledge and understanding of various learning difficulties and disabilities to provide a very good level of care.

Children are encouraged, praised and thanked for their achievements. The childminder works hard to raise the children's self-esteem which has a very positive impact on their behaviour. They respond to her calm and consistent manner and behave very well. Younger children are encouraged to understand their emotions through the excellent use of stories and discussions about feelings. As a result there is a lovely happy atmosphere where children are eager to please, like to be involved in small chores and have developed good manners and relationships with each other.

An excellent partnership with parents exists which promotes very good continuity of care for children. A comprehensive information booklet, policy and procedure file, noticeboard and detailed records ensure that all relevant information is shared. Parents are fully informed of their child's day through informal chats at either end of the day. The childminder seeks feedback from parents to enable her to improve her practice. Parents show their appreciation of the excellent service they receive through testimonial letters where they describe how their children are 'loved, nurtured, educated, healthy and happy', and how they are 'incredibly lucky to have the childminder in their lives'.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's very high quality care is promoted through the childminder's high level of experience, Level 3 qualifications and superb organisation. All policies and procedures are comprehensive, shared with parents and organised to reflect the outcomes for children. They fully support her outstanding childcare practice. She is passionate about improving her practice, identifies areas for development and seeks training to enable her to implement improvements. For example, she has attended a wide range of training to enable her to be proactive in providing an inclusive environment. All necessary documentation is completed correctly, is up to date, reviewed regularly and maintained in a confidential manner.

The childminder has a dedicated playroom where the space is organised to be very child friendly. All the resources meet the requirements of the children's stages of development. Individual needs are very effectively met through the childminder's attention to detail. Each child's routines and requirements are discussed with parents before the onset of care. Children benefit from an excellent range of indoor and outdoor activities and experiences, giving them a balanced and interesting day. The children take ownership of their day as they make decisions about their play, choosing from free play or joining in planned experiences. The childminder supervises children exceptionally well, enabling them to play safely and independently.

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 obtain written parental permission for agreed times for the assistant to have sole charge of children. This permission is now sought at the onset of care.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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