

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310032
Inspection date	10 September 2007
Inspector	Sharon, Amelia Robson

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 1991. She lives with her family in a mature residential area on the outskirts of the town of North Shields, North Tyneside. Transport systems are varied, making the setting easily accessible. Local provisions including nurseries, playgroups, parks and library are within walking distance of the setting.

Children have access to the living/dining room, kitchen and bathroom on the first floor. There is access to a rear yard for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years and at present she is caring for seven children aged 21 months to eight years, on a part-time basis.

The childminder has recently completed CACHE Level 3 in childminding practice and has also completed the National Childminding Association Quality Award Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because the childminder follows effective written policies and practices, which meet their physical, nutritional and health needs. The very good adult support and guidance helps children gain a very good understanding of good hygiene routines. Children are made aware of very good personal hygiene through positive role modelling provided by the childminder and the opportunities they are given to develop their skills. The policy and detailed discussion with parents regarding the admission of sick children helps to minimise the risk of cross infection and, therefore, safeguards children's health. Detailed accident and medication recording systems are in place and are clear, up to date and confidentially maintained. The childminder has completed relevant first aid training and has access to a suitable first aid kit.

Children enjoy an extremely healthy and nutritious diet, as the childminder ensures children have fresh foods at mealtimes. Children are able to help with shopping for fresh fruit and vegetables and are able to choose their favourites. They are also involved in preparing snacks and in age appropriate cooking activities. Children have access to their own drinks throughout the day, encouraging children to help themselves and promoting their independence. The childminder has detailed information about each child's dietary needs, including their likes and dislikes. She has completed a basic food hygiene course.

Children have opportunities to take part in stimulating indoor and outdoor activities. The childminder has knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has completed relevant training. She has a great understanding of each child's stage of development and ensures she provides children with opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities that are appropriate to their age and ability. They have walks in the local community daily and regular visits to the park and the soft play, allowing children to develop their physical skills, such as climbing, balancing and jumping. Children are given lots of very positive encouragement by the childminder to enjoy these activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment. The home is very well organised and maintained, giving children opportunities to explore and select activities and resources safely. A very good range of equipment is available and in use, taking into account the age of children being cared for. An extremely comprehensive safety policy is in place, which includes the safe evacuation of the home. Through very thorough risk assessments, the childminder ensures that all areas accessed by children are very safe. The childminder has a very good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits for children. Whilst out and about with the children she discusses road safety and how to cross the road safely. Children also have the opportunity to read books, colour pictures and completed puzzles that are related to road safety.

Children use a wide variety of good quality equipment, appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is regularly monitored to ensure it is safe and well maintained. Toys and resources are replaced, updated and added to on a regular basis and the childminder ensures they meet relevant safety standards. She keeps up to date with changes in legislation, for example, she has information on the changes to the law regarding car restraints for children.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the childminder who has a very good understanding of child protection procedures and her role in safeguarding children. She has completed child protection training and has comprehensive written policies and procedures that support her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's home; they are extremely happy and settled. They achieve well because the childminder is highly skilled and uses her extensive knowledge to provide high quality care. The children make positive relationships with her and their peers. Children's confidence and self-esteem are given high priority as they are offered praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Their independence is fostered as they make their own choices and decisions. Children's learning is developed through an extensive range of stimulating activities and resources, such as craft activities, imaginative play, and music and dancing. Children were given the opportunity to make musical instruments which they use when singing with the childminder.

The childminder interacts extremely well with the children, giving lots of attention, encouragement and motivation to play and enjoy activities. Children learn and develop their understanding of numbers, shapes and colours in age appropriate and fun ways. For example, children play games matching colours and shapes, and books to practise letters and numbers. Children are able to select toys and play materials from the extremely wide range available. They are very enthusiastic as they use their natural sense of curiosity and develop their imagination. They use an extensive range of art and craft materials in many different ways to create interesting pictures and models. Parents are kept informed about their children's activities and outings they have experienced from daily discussion. Children also have files with pictures and art work they have completed and photographs of what they have been doing.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and knowledge of the Foundation Stage, and takes this into account when planning activities, ensuring she covers all areas of children's development. All plans are flexible in order to accommodate children's individual needs and to take into account children's interests. Activities and outings are evaluated and the childminder looks at ways of extending children's experiences, she also monitors children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of belonging. Children are valued and respected as individuals and the childminder's aim is to ensure all children feel welcome, happy and settled in her care. She strives to help children reach their full potential and meet their needs. Children have access to a wide range of resources that reflect positive images of culture and gender, including books and puppets. However, the resources available regarding disability are limited.

Children behave extremely well, in a very calm and friendly environment. They learn about sharing and valuing others by the very positive role model provided by the childminder and the consistent boundaries in place. She gently and sensitively supports and encourages children in their daily routines and activities, this enables them to develop their self-esteem and confidence.

Children respond well to guidance from the childminder and the very good range of strategies she has in place for dealing with children's behaviour. She gives lots of praise and encouragement for positive behaviour and has helped the children make a list of house rules. The childminder has completed a number of courses on behaviour management for children of all ages.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being; the childminder is extremely friendly and approachable. Parents are given a wealth of information, in the form of a written pack which includes details about the service provided, and policies and procedures. This ensures parents are well informed and made to feel welcome from the onset of a placement. Daily diaries and chats keep parents up to date with their child's progress and welfare. In addition to this the childminder has procedures in place to update and review information and is always available to talk to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the very good organisation and the effective health and safety measures taken. They have access to a wide range of resources and stimulating activities, which effectively meet their individual needs. Children benefit from a skilled childminder, who has regard for the well-being of all the children in her care. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play.

The childminder has sound knowledge of child development and has completed a number of courses, covering a wide variety of topics. She is extremely pro-active in accessing training, reads relevant publications and ensures she keeps up to date with current practice. She has recently completed CACHE Level 3 in childminding practice and has also completed an endorsed quality assurance scheme. Children benefit greatly from the childminder's increased development and increased knowledge.

All required documentation is in place and regularly reviewed, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. The recording systems in place are organised effectively, are confidentially maintained and are supplemented by relevant parental consents and contracts. The childminder has comprehensive written policies and procedures, including detailed information for parents.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Smoke detectors are situated appropriately as requested at the last inspection and the childminder now has written parental permission to seek or administer emergency treatment.

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 can be seen 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):

- expand resources that promote positive images of disability.

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