

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310136
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Cathryn Parry
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 1988. She lives alone in the residential area of Whitley Bay. The whole of the flat is used for childminding. There is an enclosed patio garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under eight years. The childminder also cares for children aged over eight years. She walks to local schools to take and collect children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children flourish as they access good opportunities for physical play, including using climbing equipment in the local park. They explore, test and develop physical control, for instance, when using hoops and skipping ropes. Children are active or restful through choice and sleep in-line with their individual needs and parent's wishes. A varied and imaginative menu encourages children to have a good awareness of healthy meal options and the opportunity to try new

foods. Examples of this are where children enjoy prawn crackers, cheese bread sticks and fresh fruit. They are also involved in preparing homemade vegetable soup from a young age. This fosters good lifestyle habits. Children confidently ask for drinks when they are thirsty, as well as having water and organic milk regularly provided.

Children can participate fully in activities as the premises and equipment are clean. The childminder regularly washes resources and vacuums the soft toys. This is complemented by her encouraging the children to be involved. They are learning good personal hygiene through consistent routines and positive role modelling. Each child has an individual hand towel and flannel as well as hand washing before meals and after using the toilet being encouraged. The childminder's good relationship with parents and effective procedures, ensure children are cared for appropriately when ill. This reduces the risk of the spread of infection. Relevant documentation with regard to health, including specific dietary needs and most consent forms are in place and up to date. These positively safeguard children's well-being. However, parents and carers do not give written consent for the childminder to gain advice or emergency medical treatment. This has a negative impact on maintaining children's well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are generally safeguarded well as the childminder's home is secure. This is supplemented with effective procedures for adults collecting children. The sitting room and dining room have windows, which enable children to benefit from natural light whilst playing indoors. The childminder has taken action to ensure that risks inside and outside her home have been minimised, so that children can play safely. This includes fitting a new garage door and new windows with safety glass. Children are able to explore confidently using high quality resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. They participate in activities fully as furniture and equipment are of an appropriate size. Routines, such as using the Green Cross Code and participating in fire evacuation practices encourage children to take responsibility for their own safety. Those who go on outings are kept safe as the childminder is vigilant and encourages good practice, such as holding hands. She also uses age-appropriate restraints and wrist bands, which have an emergency contact number on.

All safety equipment is in place reducing the risk of accidents. This includes a smoke detector, electrical socket covers and a fire blanket. Daily visual risk assessments reduce the risk of accidental injury. Children's individual needs are met well as the childminder ensures there is sufficient equipment available. This includes appropriate car seats, buggies and a cot. Children are protected well as the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues. They are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment. The childminder has procedures and documentation in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children really enjoy their time with the childminder and are eager to participate in the wide variety of activities provided. These include gardening experiences, manipulating play dough and painting acetates to decorate windows. All children make good progress and have fun, as the childminder plans activities and experiences giving regard to their interests. An example of this is where a child's curiosity in fish led to a visit to the Sea Life Centre, the purchase of

related posters and the provision of pretend sea creatures and a circular blue mat to mimic the water. A very good balance of child-centred and adult-led experiences ensures appropriate challenge for their age and stage of development. Effective use is made of the local area giving children a breadth of opportunities, including trips to the beach, library and shops. The childminder regularly extends activities, for instance, where the children collect leaves, print with them and then use the photocopier to repeat patterns. This inspires children to be creative and increases their knowledge of the natural world. Children delight in using their imagination as they play in the tent, dress up and pretend to be vets with the soft toys, stethoscope and bandages.

Children's communication skills are fostered very well through various activities, including songs and rhymes. This is complemented with letter and phonic posters, as well as a wide range of books. They have a growing understanding of the world that they live in through a variety of well-planned and spontaneous experiences, such as going on walks and discussing the sounds that the birds make and looking at the bees gathering pollen from the flowers. A wide variety of creative activities including glass painting, cutting, sticking, and felt collage promote children's self-expression whilst having fun. Children's mathematical thinking is encouraged well as they explore different shaped bean bags, experiment with puzzles and familiarise themselves with numbers in books and on posters. These include times tables for older children. The childminder has attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and implements this positively with the younger children, encouraging good progress in all areas. Their interest is effectively encouraged through a wide variety of manmade and natural resources. The childminder has developed individual files for the children, which include photographs, examples of their art work and regularly completed developmental check lists. This has a positive impact on the activities and experiences she provides and on informing parents and carers of their children's progress. Children's all round development is fostered very well. The childminder provides a wide range of activities and experiences for the children. She extends their learning and development by being actively involved in their play. Therefore, children are happy and very settled in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A short induction period, including visits with parents, enables children to settle into the new environment. The childminder's confident approach to equal opportunities actively contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. This is complemented with access to a wide selection of resources reflecting different cultures, including dolls, books and different skin tone crayons. There are also small world figures showing positive images of people with disabilities. Children's awareness and understanding of different traditions is raised as they celebrate different festivals, such as Chinese New Year. The childminder has some experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and has worked with other professionals to meet their individual needs. She shows a very positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge of behaviour management, giving good examples of how she would approach a variety of situations for children of different ages. These include using a firm voice and appropriate tone, as well as a short time out if necessary. Children are encouraged to consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others. These strategies are discussed with parents and carers to ensure continuity of care. A file including a range of policies and procedures is available for parents and carers to see. Consequently, they are fully aware of the service provided. Information is shared daily between

the childminder, parents and carers. This fosters good relationships and ensures individual needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's play opportunities are maximised through the effective organisation of space, time and resources. The effective use of the dining room and sitting room enable children to play alone or with others. They can simultaneously participate in quieter and more boisterous experiences. The flexible routine incorporates time to visit places of interest, as well as picking children up from the local school. Toys and resources are rotated to inspire children to play. Some are stored in low-level cupboards to encourage free choice and independence.

The childminder's ongoing commitment to training and completion of a quality assurance scheme has a significantly positive impact on the high quality of care provided. She shows a raised awareness of the effect of activities and experiences on children's overall development. The childminder is aware of her current registration restrictions and adheres to them. This has a positive impact on safeguarding children. All legally required documentation is in place and implemented well. This positively contributes to children's overall well-being.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the childminder was asked to include a healthy eating policy in the parent's policies pack. This is now in place, which has a positive impact on children's well-being.

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 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):

- gain written permission from parents and carers to seek emergency medical advice or 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