

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY248450
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Larner
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 2002. She lives with her partner, who is also a registered childminder, and two children aged 18 and 15 years, in Blyth, Northumberland.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding as well as a bathroom and bedroom on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family has three pet cats.

The childminder and her partner currently have nine children on roll, all of whom attend various times before school, after school and during the day.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Excellent, consistent procedures the childminder has in place help to safeguard children's health superbly. Children dry their hands with disposable paper towels and surfaces are washed down immediately, such as highchairs, to ensure that cross-infection is limited and the children's

health is very well protected. The childminder wears disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies which further contributes to limiting the risk of infection. Children have regular, consistent access to their own named bottle of drinking water and regularly clean their teeth with individually marked toothbrushes which are kept in separate cups.

A consistent, unique policy to deal with children who are ill encourages parents to consider the benefits of keeping their children at home. The childminder has produced a poem about what to do when children are sick and gives a copy of this to each of the parents to ensure they have a good understanding of what to do if their children are unwell. A written no smoking policy and an award for promoting a smoke free environment shows the childminder places a very high emphasis on promoting the children's welfare. For example, people visiting the home, such as workmen are told not to smoke, within a certain radius of the house.

Children enjoy excellently planned, fun activities to help them begin to learn about healthy eating. Posters of fruit and vegetables are displayed in the playroom and children grow, tend to and then eat fruit and vegetables, such as strawberries, cress and peppers. Children have plentiful opportunities to enjoy healthy snacks, such as apples and bananas, due to the childminder constantly checking if children would like something to eat. She very successfully meets their individual needs at different times, for example, after younger children have had a sleep or by listening carefully to the children's requests.

Children sleep and rest according to their own individual needs; due to good organisation of the premises, children can choose where they feel most comfortable sleeping. For example, a cosy, warm area is made for a toddler who readily lets the childminder know when they want to have a rest. Children's health needs are met very well. Preventative measures, such as fully stocked first aid kits in the home, car and for outings, ensure that accidents can be dealt with quickly and effectively. This further contributes very well to children's overall welfare.

Children enjoy lots of opportunities to be active indoors, in the garden and outdoors. Regular walks to school and nursery help to contribute to children's good health. Playing skittles and swing-ball in the garden and clearing space in the living room for children to clamber onto the see-saw or play physical board games provide opportunities for children to exercise during the day. Good personal hygiene is very effectively promoted by the childminder and stickers reminding children to wash their hands are displayed in the toilet. Low level holders for paper towels encourage children to take care of their own personal needs independently, alongside the childminder's sensitive prompting, when needed.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an environment where a massive emphasis is placed on ensuring their safety. Excellent procedures and vigilance from the childminder, such as checking that doors are locked after persons have left the house, contribute to an impeccable understanding of the importance of maintaining procedures to ensure that children are safe and the premises secure. At differing times through the day, for example, when her partner goes to collect children from school, the living room door is locked to ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised, whilst still using all of the play areas safely. The childminder ensures that older children's independence is promoted whilst maintaining safety at all times, for example, children safely use the toilet themselves as bedroom doors upstairs are locked to prevent access.

Children practise regular fire drills to ensure that they are very familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency. They know they need to tell the adults if the smoke detector sounds and are aware of how to get out of the house, which contributes very well to safeguarding their welfare. Children learn about all aspects of safety in a fun and interesting way. The childminder uses safety books to talk about issues and simple puzzles to compound their learning. The childminder understands the importance of highlighting safety issues to the parents by providing them with useful information and word searches to complete.

Regular consistent routines, for example, making sure that children using highchairs are safe, sharing information with parents on safety equipment, such as car seats, maintaining a record of visitors and employing baby monitors effectively, contribute very well to ensuring that children's welfare is safeguarded.

A warm and welcoming atmosphere is created, where children know they are valued. Photographs of themselves and their own work, such as showing how they looked after the fruit and vegetables in the garden, are prominently displayed in the playroom. This contributes to raising their self-esteem and confidence. The childminder has created a bright and airy space for children's play decorated with posters displaying colours and the alphabet to encourage children's learning. Low level pegs on the wall encourage children to gain independence as they can easily reach aprons themselves to put on before they paint.

A wide and very varied range of equipment ensures that children are motivated and make choices about their play. They enjoy sitting at small tables to draw and colour in and use the space well as they carry blocks through to the living room to build towers and models. The childminder ensures that equipment remains interesting for children by rotating toys on a regular basis, for example, she changes the pretend food in the role play corner on a weekly basis. Children have great fun deciding what they want to do as they enjoy imaginary play with the ironing board, dress up as pirates and construct models.

The childminder shows a very good understanding of child protection issues and is committed to further developing her skills by attending training, such as awareness courses, which in turn, benefits the care of the children. An excellent awareness of the children being the main priority ensures that children's welfare is safeguarded. Very consistent procedures, such as monitoring concerns, a thorough knowledge of the types of abuse and clear procedures of who to contact if she had concerns ensures that children are cared for by adults who promote their safety well.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy, settled and content in the childminder's care. They enjoy extremely positive relationships with the childminder and due to this, approach her confidently for support and reassurance as they climb onto her knee for a cuddle when they are feeling tired. Children are listened and responded to constantly as they express their views, tell the childminder what they want and readily express their likes and dislikes. The childminder engages children in meaningful conversations as she brings out a tomato from the kitchen and encourages them to recall what they grew in the garden at summertime.

Children are engrossed in a hive of activity where their development and learning are valued and encouraged, as is their capacity to have fun and enjoy the activities they complete. Children eagerly gather around the table to complete jigsaws and through skilful questioning the childminder encourages children to identify colours and count shapes. The childminder knows

the children she cares for extremely well and because of this she plans for play activities that she knows will stimulate them, for example, as she takes some children to the garden centre on an outing after finding out they really enjoyed growing plants. Children enjoy a good variety of activities and play opportunities, such as playing with dough and baking.

Children are enveloped in a positive environment where the childminder shows genuine care and concern for their overall development and needs, helping children to feel valued and respected. She regards the children's care and happiness as her main priority and helps them feel comfortable by suggesting they have a rest when they are tired, enquires if they are too hot and helps them take their jumper off, and offers them drinks for their sore throat when they begin to cough. All of this contributes to children feeling very comfortable, settled and enjoying their time with the childminder immensely.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Parents are very well informed about the care of their children and the service the childminder provides. She provides information to parents on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and specific written procedures are readily displayed, such as the no smoking policy. A comprehensive folder for each child is shared with their parents, showing their work, areas of development the childminder is working on and what children have done during their time with the childminder. A good exchange of information about what the children will be doing ensures that parents are well informed about the activities of the sessions and ensures appropriate clothing can be brought, for example, wellington boots on a rainy day.

Children behave very well. They enjoy helping each other with simple tasks, such as helping each other and the childminder to dress up. They helpfully tidy away blocks conscientiously and receive a sticker as a reward, which works very well. Children receive very positive, regular praise for all of their achievements, for example after eating their lunch, and because of this they are keen to share their achievements with the childminder, as they shout to her after they've finished counting certain objects. Children are reminded of the clear boundaries about behaviour in a calm and consistent manner, for example, as the childminder explains why it is not nice to push other children, which helps them to learn how to behave appropriately.

Equal opportunities and valuing individuals are promoted well in the setting. Children readily play with all of the toys as they request prams and dolls to play with. They play with resources that help them gain an awareness of diversity, such as ethnic dolls and posters displayed with welcome messages in different languages. Children enjoy visits to local events to gain an awareness of different cultures, for example, the childminder takes them to visit a nearby library holding an exhibition on Chinese new year. The childminder regularly discusses children's specific individual needs with the parents to ensure these can be met effectively and changes her practice, when needed, to ensure that all children are included in the setting.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are very well supported by the childminder to ensure they remain focused and motivated with their play and learning. She encourages their development very well by linking into children's play and interests, such as flash cards, and asking them questions to extend their development. Children are responded to in a positive and caring manner, which ensures they are listened to and their views and requests respected, for example, as the childminder gets

out different toys the children ask for and provides them with a lovely welcome as they wake up from their afternoon nap.

Organisation of the premises is very good, however, on some occasions children's ability to independently select resources such as toys is slightly limited. Space is used particularly well by the childminder to ensure that children have as much choice as possible, whilst also maintaining their safety. For example, an easel with paints and paper is readily set up in the kitchen which they can use on request. The childminder and her partner work very well together to meet children's individual needs, for example, they tell each other when they are taking children upstairs to the toilet and ensure that children are well supervised at all times.

The childminder shows a dedicated and committed approach to developing her practice and providing a good service for children. She attends training courses, which further benefits the care of the children by completing training at the older children's schools to make sure she has the knowledge to help them with their homework. Paperwork and records are very clear and maintained in a confidential manner. The childminder pays particular attention to details which benefit the safety of the children, for example, by documenting side effects that may occur from the medication that children bring.

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 agreed to provide a first aid box and regularly check the contents, and request written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment.

The childminder ensures that permission to seek emergency medical treatment is in place when children start to attend, which contributes to further benefiting children's overall welfare. The childminder has several first aid boxes in place to ensure she can deal with any accidents effectively. These are regularly checked to make sure their contents are suitable and impeccably well organised, for example, she prepares bandages in advance to deal with certain emergencies, such as glass penetrating the skin.

### **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):

- continue to develop the organisation of the premises to promote children's independence.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)