

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313883
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Marilyn Besford
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 July 1997. She lives with her husband and three children, aged 15 years, 11 years and 20 months, in a house in Hobson, near Burnopfield. Her home is near schools and preschool facilities, including nursery, play group, toddler group and Sure Start provision. There are shops, sports and leisure amenities in the surrounding area and a travelling library visits.

The areas of the premises used for childminding are the ground floor and one bedroom on the first floor. There is provision for outdoor play in the back garden and in surrounding countryside. The family pets are fish and a cockatiel.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She may care for up to five children at any one time and there is one child on the roll at present.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is being very well promoted because the childminder pays careful attention to health care, hygiene and cleanliness. Clear, efficient hygiene routines, such as nappy changing using gloves, reduce the risk of the spread of infection. Through the childminder's teaching, such as introducing children to washing their hands after a nappy change, children are beginning to learn good personal care skills. A booster step enables them to reach the hand basin independently and they have individual towels for hand drying.

Children enjoy being physically active with space to move freely in the garden. They are developing healthy bodies and movement skills as they explore slides, ride on and push wheeled toys and try hard to master see-saws, with delighted expressions on their faces. The childminder's effective policies for dealing with accidents and the administration of medication protect children well and keep parents informed. However, the record of permission to seek emergency medical treatment does not clearly identify the child and parents do not sign the written record of medicine administered to acknowledge the entry.

Children's dietary needs are very well catered for as the childminder provides a wide variety of home-cooked meals. Drinks of water or very diluted fruit juice are always available for children to help themselves to. Children are becoming good, independent eaters through social interaction at mealtimes, with everyone sitting together, using suitable utensils and seating, such as highchairs. The childminder provides parents with written information about their child's food and drink, sharing recipes and helping them to encourage the enjoyment of new and unfamiliar foods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe and secure child-centred environment. The areas used indoors and outside give them space for different activities and there is provision for rest in a quiet bedroom. They enjoy good access to a wide range of play materials and equipment, which are safe and appropriate for their ages and developmental stages. For example, very young children do not have access to very small items. Play materials are good quality, conform to safety standards and are regularly checked for condition and cleanliness by the childminder to ensure that they continue to be safe.

The childminder's awareness of safety protects children well. She supervises children carefully, considers risks in her home and minimises them by using safety equipment, such as a fireguard, safety gate and socket covers. However, children can easily reach the long cords of the vertical blinds and this is a hazard to them. Children are effectively safeguarded by the childminder's attention to fire safety. She has had advice and a home check by the fire brigade, has newly fitted smoke alarms and her emergency escape plans cover all eventualities, including when a child is asleep upstairs.

Children's safety and welfare are promoted by the childminder's clear knowledge of child protection. She understands and accepts her responsibilities to safeguard children from neglect or abuse and knows who to contact if she has any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and are happy and comfortable in the childminder's home. They enjoy very warm, affectionate relationships with her and have wider social contacts with other children at toddler groups. They have fun with a wide range of stimulating, enjoyable activities. They have time to explore and become absorbed in their play, learning to persevere and delighting in developing skills.

Children benefit from the childminder's interest in what they say and do. She listens carefully and talks with them, and they spontaneously sing nursery rhymes, promoting their language development very well. Through the childminder's enthusiasm, encouragement and praise, they are building their confidence to try new things, such as bouncing on space hoppers.

The childminder follows children's individual routines, such as times for rests, which means they benefit from one to one attention at times during the day. She uses their chosen comforters, such as dummies, to help them feel safe and secure, contributing to their emotional wellbeing. Children's overall development is being encouraged well because of the childminder's understanding of how children learn and develop, supported by the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals. The effective exchange of written and verbal information between the childminder and parents means that varying needs and any particular requirements are clearly established and met well. They fully discuss all aspects of care and family circumstances, take time to settle children and talk about the child's progress and activities. A daily diary provides an informative and entertaining account of each day's care and experiences, much appreciated by parents. This good partnership contributes to a warm and consistent care environment for children.

Children show a sense of belonging and are secure in daily routines of rest, meals and play. They are being helped to have some independence, such as choosing toys and activities. They are beginning to find out that they are part of a wider community as they go for walks, use local amenities, and play with equipment and toys which are not stereotyped and show the diversity of cultures in the wider world.

The childminder's positive approach, with consistent praise and encouragement, means children behave well. They thrive in a positive, caring relationship with the childminder and are learning social skills, such as sharing play materials with each other. They confidently express their feelings through speech, sounds and body language, for example, responding with smiles and seeking a cuddle from the childminder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's good organisation of all aspects of her care effectively promotes children's wellbeing, ensuring they are secure, settled and making good progress. They benefit from her keen attitude towards increasing her knowledge and skills through training, which helps in planning activities and promoting children's development.

Children are kept safe and healthy because the childminder maintains a current first aid certificate and provides a welcoming, child-friendly environment, with access to very appropriate resources to meet their play and care needs.

The childminder understands her responsibilities under the National Standards and explains these to parents in clear and informative policies. She provides continuity of care for children through discussing care needs with parents and keeping records of all relevant information.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

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):

- ensure that the cords on vertical blinds are not a hazard to children
- improve documentation to fully identify children in records.

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