

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313761
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 1998. She lives with her husband and their two children, aged 11 and 14 years, in the village of Annfield Plain on the outskirts of Stanley. The whole of the downstairs and first floor bathroom is used for childminding and there is an enclosed rear yard.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and currently has six children under the age of eight years of age and one child over the age of eight on roll. The childminder collects children from the local primary school and regularly attends parent and toddler groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming family home where they begin to learn about the importance of good hygiene throughout their daily routines. Consistent adult support and guidance encourages children to become increasingly independent in their personal care, for

example, washing hands after using the bathroom or before eating. The childminder has a good understanding of promoting hygiene, she ensures that all benches and tables are washed before food is served and children have their own cups and plates to prevent cross-infection. Clear sick child procedures, an up to date first aid certificate and the effective recording of medication and accidents further promotes children's health and well-being.

The childminder provides a good range of activities to enhance children physical development. They regularly attend soft play and toddler groups and go for walks to the park where they play on slides, swings and with footballs. Such activities promote children's physical development and teach children that exercise is fun. The childminder has suitable procedures in place for children to sleep, this ensures that children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

The childminder has a good understanding of the importance of a healthy and balanced diet. She ensures that young children have plenty of drinks and older children are able to ask for a drink whenever they need one, ensuring that they remain hydrated. The childminder consults with parents to ensure that she is aware of any individual dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment, where risks are identified and minimised. As a result, children are able to move around freely, safely and independently. The childminder has good procedures in place to ensure that children remain safe, for example, covering sockets, locking external doors and keeping doors to the kitchen and stairs closed. Smoke alarms and regular practising of the fire drill further promotes children's safety. A well maintained range of toys and resources are placed out for children in low-level boxes so that children are able to self-select from them. The childminder ensures that toys are clean, in safe condition and suitable for the age and stage of development of the children.

Effective procedures ensure that children remain safe on outings. For example, young children are securely strapped into pushchairs or wear reins, while older children walk close by. The childminder practises road safety with the children and ensures that she carries emergency contact numbers with her. The childminder has good procedures in place to ensure that children would be well cared for by other registered childminders in emergency situations.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection as a result of attending relevant training courses. She is confident about the signs and symptoms to be aware of and has clear written procedures in place should she have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are generally settled and happy at the childminder's home and choose from a good range of toys and resources which are placed out for them by the childminder. Children benefit from a broad range of activities both in and out of the home. For example, they take bats and balls to the park and at home they enjoy imaginative play with telephones and making people and cars out of building bricks. The children have good opportunities to socialise with their peers and friends as they visit local soft play areas and go regularly to toddler groups.

The childminder maintains good interaction with the children as she sits with them and is involved in their activities. She supports colour and number recognition as children play with shape sorters and gives praise when they identify the colours. Children move around the setting freely, confidently choosing toys from low-level boxes. They are confident with the childminder and come to her to play and for reassurance and cuddles, such positive relationships help to increase children's self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from good opportunities to learn about their local community, as they regularly attend toddler groups and go for walks to the library to choose books. A good range of resources and some planned activities at toddler group help children to learn about diversity, for example, celebrating the Chinese New Year, however, planned activities are limited. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is committed to working with parents to ensure that she could support any individual needs to promote children's development and care.

Consistent behaviour management ensures children understand right from wrong. The childminder has a written behaviour management policy in place and uses age appropriate techniques to encourage children's positive behaviour. Basic ground rules and routines, such as taking off shoes help children to feel settled and know their boundaries at the setting. Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and parents. The childminder ensures that she shares all of her policies with parents and gathers relevant information in order to meet children's individual needs. Parents are kept up-to-date about their child's care through daily diaries and verbal feedback.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for and feel at home in a well organised setting where good procedures ensure that they are safe and secure. Toys and resources are effectively organised enabling children to access them independently and make choices about their learning and play. Flexible routines allow children to access a good range of activities in the home and community.

The childminder is committed to ongoing professional development and attends regular training to further enhance her practice and the care of the children. For example, a diploma in home based child care and a health and safety course. All records which are required for the safe and effective management of the provision are in place, in line with regulations. The childminder keeps an up-to-date register and all adults in the house have undergone relevant checks to safeguard children.

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 recommendations were made to obtain a relevant first aid certificate and to develop a complaints procedure. The childminder has now completed a first aid course and has all relevant information regarding the complaints procedure in place and shares this with parents.

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 complaint 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 activities to promote children's understanding of diversity.

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