

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313945
Inspection date	26 October 2007
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst
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 1996. She lives with her husband in Consett, County Durham. The house is situated in a cul-de-sac, within walking distance of the village. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding which includes a downstairs toilet and washbasin. There is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding two children. The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and regularly attends a local parent/toddler group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming home, where they begin to learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care throughout their daily routine. Consistent adult support and guidance helps children to gain a good understanding of hygiene and become

increasingly independent in their personal care, washing their hands before eating, after playing outside in the garden and after visiting the bathroom. The childminder follows an effective nappy changing routine, ensuring disposable gloves are worn and nappies disposed of hygienically. This helps to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. A current first aid certificate, clear written policies regarding sick children and the effective recording of all accidents and medication promote children's health and well-being.

Children enjoy a good range of fun activities which contribute to their good health. Outdoor play is a regular feature of their care as they visit local toddler groups, play in the secure back garden, as well as walking to and from school. Each day the childminder plans both indoor and outdoor activities which help promote children's physical development and help them gain increasing control over their bodies.

Children enjoy wholesome, nutritious snacks, such as fresh fruit. Good arrangements are in place which ensure that meals provided by parents are appropriately stored and prepared. Regular drinks are offered throughout the day to ensure children never become thirsty. Mealtimes are a relaxed social occasion for the children to enjoy. The childminder keeps parents verbally informed of what their children have eaten throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, warm and welcoming environment. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because the childminder is extremely vigilant. The environment is very well organised so that children have space to play freely and safely. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure they are safe, stimulating and appropriate for their age and stage of development. Regular safety checks ensure that toys remain in a safe condition.

Children are very well cared for and their safety within the home is given high priority. Examples of this include the way the childminder has devised emergency care plans and how emergency evacuation procedures are practised with the children on a regular basis. Visual risk assessments and close physical proximity maintains children's safety when they are outdoors in public areas.

Children are very well protected by the childminder, who is confident and secure in her knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. She has attended a safeguarding children course to ensure her knowledge is up to date. This is reinforced through a clear and comprehensive policy, ensuring that children's welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter with confidence, reassured by the warm greeting they receive from the childminder. Warm relationships between the childminder and the children contribute to children's sense of belonging. Children take part in a good range of appropriate indoor and outdoor activities. Resources are well presented to allow children easy access and children select their activities independently. They are inquisitive and interested in the toys available. Children benefit from the secure relationship and support they receive from the childminder. She plays alongside the children, actively engaging in their play.

Children's self-esteem is developing as a result of the childminder encouraging and praising them and valuing what they have to offer. They are confident to play alone, but also to seek interaction. Communication skills are developing because the childminder allows time to talk to and listen to the children. She recognises young children's competence and appreciates their efforts when they show their understanding or attempt new words and sounds. Although the childminder has a good awareness of children's development, she has no systems in place to successfully monitor and track children's individual progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to develop a sense of belonging because the childminder warmly welcomes them into her home and ensures that toys and activities are readily available to them. The childminder has a clear knowledge of children's individual needs and responds accordingly to meet those needs.

Age appropriate behaviour management strategies are well implemented, in a calm and consistent manner. Children respond positively to this and their behaviour is good. They are beginning to develop their self-esteem and confidence. They are well supported and encouraged to make choices, and to develop their independence as appropriate to their age and ability.

Children benefit from sound relationships the childminder has developed with parents. Young children settle well because they have introductory visits which are tailored around their needs. Through discussion the childminder ensures parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and care. She gains appropriate information about the children when they first attend and she has written agreements in place with parents; this ensures that she is aware of and is able to meet children's individual needs. The childminder has developed written policies which provide parents with clear information about the service she offers and help to contribute to continuity in the children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a very strong commitment to the continuous development of her childminding practice, to provide a high quality service. She keeps abreast of current issues in childcare by accessing training, which ensures she is very well informed and up to date with new developments. She uses her knowledge effectively to provide children with a range of learning experiences. Written policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. They are also used to inform the parents about the service and to inform them about their children's activities and achievements. All confidential information is stored appropriately.

Children are comfortable, happy and relaxed with the childminder. Information is fully shared with parents to involve them so that continuity of care benefits the children. Space, resources and equipment are organised effectively to meet children's needs. They experience individual attention, with the childminder helping them to develop positive relationships.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that household equipment was appropriately stored. The childminder now stores all equipment out of reach of children. This improvement ensures children's overall safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

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 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):

- develop a system to track and monitor children's ongoing progress.

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