

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401580
Inspection date	15 November 2007
Inspector	Julie Larner
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been a registered childminder since 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, aged six and nine years old, in Stakeford, Northumberland.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and the toilet and children's bedrooms on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family has a pet budgie.

There are currently 6 children on roll, all of whom attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to play outside. They ride on scooters and push-along toys which contributes to their physical development and helps them to benefit from an active lifestyle. The childminder ensures that daily walks to school and a nearby park help children to enjoy fresh air and feeding the ducks. A high emphasis is placed on playing outdoors because

of the children's enjoyment of this, meaning they are involved in games and activities that they like.

Some food and meals are prepared by the childminder. She has completed further training in food safety to ensure that the children's welfare is safeguarded by meals being prepared appropriately. Children enjoy healthy eating options. They have sandwiches, fruit and yoghurt for lunch and meals, such as sweetcorn, sausage and mash for tea. Whilst efforts are made to encourage children to have regular drinks, for example, with their meals, drinks are not readily accessible for children to access independently.

The childminder supports children with their personal care well. She helps them wipe their noses and regularly checks if they need their nappies changed. The childminder's own personal hygiene is very good. She promptly washes her hands very consistently at appropriate times, such as after disposing of used tissues and changing nappies, which helps to limit the risk of cross infection. A clear and effective sick children policy is practised by the childminder, which is discussed with parents to keep them well informed. For example, the childminder informs parents if her own family has been ill to ensure that minded children's health can be further safeguarded.

Children are cared for in a clean, hygienic environment where they play with well maintained toys and equipment. Paperwork and training to contribute to children's welfare is in place, such as up-to-date first aid training, information containing individual children's medical needs, and dietary needs. This means that the childminder can meet the children's individual needs appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children choose from a wealth of good quality toys and equipment that interests them. The childminder helps children to become focused and motivated in their play as she rotates the toys on a regular basis. She does this during the sessions by offering younger children different toys that they like, and in a more planned approach daily, to ensure that toys and equipment are developmentally appropriate for individual children. Younger children make choices about what they want to play with, due to the childminder providing easily accessible storage. For example, children pull themselves up to stand near the boxes and explore the toys.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they move around freely to explore different areas and play with toys that interest them. For example, children move from the play area to push a large truck around the settees in the living room. The childminder places a good emphasis on safety and has adapted toys that appeal to children herself to make sure they are safe. For example, she weighs down the bottom of a push-along toy with a large plastic bottle to make sure it is sturdy enough for less mobile, younger children to explore themselves.

The childminder ensures that the necessary equipment and procedures to maintain children's safety, are in place, such as socket covers. She supervises different ages of children well when they are playing together outside, and makes sure the premises are secure to ensure unauthorised persons cannot gain access and equally children cannot leave.

Children are safeguarded effectively due to the childminder's thorough understanding of child protection issues. She has completed further training to ensure that her knowledge is up-to-date

and in line with current practice, and she shows an appropriate understanding of the necessary procedures to follow if she has concerns about children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel happy and relaxed in the childminder's care due to her developing good bonds with them. They enjoy their time at the childminder's as she responds to their interests and knows them extremely well. The childminder works very successfully with children's parents and, because of this, she has the necessary knowledge and ability to meet the children's needs very effectively. For example, she shows very good awareness of children's behaviour and what this means as she quickly recognises when children are tired; equally, when rocking children to sleep in their buggies does not work, she offers them the opportunity to come out and play again. Children are involved in planned, fun activities, such as baking rice crispie cakes.

Children are listened and responded to appropriately by the childminder, as they say they are tired and the childminder offers them their individual comforter, such as a blanket. She shows an interest in what the children have done, for example, at toddler group with their parent, helping children to feel valued and respected.

Children are settled and comfortable in the setting. They receive good reassurance from the childminder when they are worried or anxious as she gives them cuddles when they come into the setting and see visitors. She knows their individual personalities and needs well as she responds to younger children's enjoyment of play, for example, by knowing they want their feet tickled when they lie down on the floor and using baby talk to respond to their gurgling.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn about taking turns and sharing. The childminder appropriately explains to children that it is a good idea to wait for turns when someone else is playing with toys, and this helps children to learn and accept the rules and boundaries in the setting. Children are lavished with praise for their efforts and achievements. For example, when they try to stand on their own or build a model from bricks to show the childminder, she claps and tells them 'well done'.

Children are valued as individuals. The childminder builds up strong relationships with parents to ensure that she collects good, comprehensive information to meet the children's needs, consequently, she knows all of the children she cares for extremely well. The childminder ensures that all of the children feel comfortable and happy in the setting by meeting these needs. For example, if children are wary of the family's pet budgie, she moves this out of the living room when they attend. Children's specific needs are known well by the childminder. She shows a very good awareness of how to promote inclusion for all of children she cares for.

Children begin to learn about diversity through every day play as they enjoy books about different people and resources which reflect different cultures, such as a talking doll that speaks Spanish. The childminder shows a sound understanding of equal opportunities, because of this, all children are included and have opportunities to play with all of the toys.

Parents are well informed about the care of their children. Daily discussions, when children are dropped off and collected, ensure that there are good opportunities to discuss what children

have been doing during the day and any specific issues, such as teething problems. The childminder gains a good picture of children's moods as she collects information from parents about how children have slept during the night, meaning she can adjust her routines for the day to suit the individual needs of the child

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children play in a well organised environment. They make decisions about what they want to do and younger children are supported well in making choices as the childminder makes suggestions to them and shows them how to use different toys, encouraging them to explore and learn. The childminder is responsive to the children's needs and stages of development. For example, she sits on the floor with younger, less mobile children to allow them to climb and pull themselves up on her.

Written policies and procedures covering several areas, such as equal opportunities, food and drink, and partnership with parents, ensure the childminder's practice is consistent for all children and parents, whilst also keeping them well informed of her service. Paperwork and documentation is maintained well in a confidential manner to further benefit the welfare of the children.

Whilst ratios for childminding are maintained by the childminder, the condition relating to the maximum numbers of children that she can care for at any one time is not. This is a breach of her conditions of registration.

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 extend her resources reflecting diversity. The childminder has added to her resources in this area with dolls, jigsaws and books to help provide opportunities for children to explore diversity in their every day play.

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 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:

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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 conditions of registration are adhered to at all times
- ensure that children have access to regular drinks throughout the sessions.

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