

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	403028
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Noreen Elizabeth Appleby
<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 1994. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 14 and 16 years, in a house in Prudhoe. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes. Toilet and hand washing facilities are also on the ground floor. Minded children do not access any first floor rooms. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the village, as well as parks, shops and local amenities.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years. She is presently caring for five children aged from 11 months to seven years, as well as two children aged over eight years. All children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes children to, and collects them from local schools. She also takes younger children to toddler group.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She also maintains informal links with other local childminders.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very clean and well maintained home. Their health and well-being are effectively protected as a result of good sickness and exclusion procedures, which are discussed and agreed with parents and carers. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating. They use individual towels, which minimises the risk of cross-contamination. Effective nappy changing procedures are in place which means that the potential risk of cross-infection is minimised. Daily routines are based around the needs of the children and provide them with times to relax or rest, as they require. A suitably stocked first aid kit is available and the childminder has completed relevant first aid training. This enables her to manage children's minor accidents competently. In addition, she maintains written agreements with parents and carers regarding the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice. No medication has been administered but there are sound plans in place, in line with regulatory requirements.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air as they regularly play in the garden or go for local walks. They particularly enjoy going to the park, where they use the climbing frame, slide, swings or roundabout. They are learning to move around confidently as they climb, balance and coordinate their movements. They also enjoy going with the childminder for walks by the river and having picnics in summer months.

Children's catering requirements are fully discussed and agreed with parents and carers to ensure any special dietary needs are effectively addressed. Babies generally bring their own formula milk and foodstuffs. The childminder ensures these are appropriately stored and reheated. Older children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals and snacks which include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. They also enjoy occasional baking activities, such as making cakes or biscuits, which they proudly take home for their family. The childminder ensures children have regular drinks, which keeps them suitably hydrated throughout the day.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a warm, inviting and child-friendly home. Play areas are spacious and uncluttered. Children move around confidently and obviously feel comfortable and settled, for example, as they chat happily with the childminder or relax on the settee whilst watching their favourite television programme. They have access to a good range of play equipment, including books, boxed games, jigsaws, art and craft activities, construction and small world materials. Resources are either readily set out on the floor or accessibly stored in stacking boxes. Therefore, children are able to self-select, which promotes their freedom of choice and independence. The childminder checks toys and equipment regularly and ensures they are maintained in a clean and safe condition.

Premises are secure and the childminder is vigilant in checking and minimising risks on a daily basis. Suitable safety equipment, such as safety gates and socket covers, are well used and hazardous materials are stored out of children's reach. Most issues are appropriately addressed, although no smoke alarm is maintained on the first floor, so children are not fully protected. A fire blanket is readily available and a fire evacuation plan has been identified. The childminder practises it with children, to help them know what to do in an emergency. Good procedures

also help children to learn to keep themselves safe when out of doors. Children explain that they must hold hands with the childminder and stop, look and listen before they cross the road. They are able to identify the sequence of the traffic lights and explain that, when using the pelican crossing, they have to wait until the green man 'beeps' before they cross. When travelling by car, children use suitable car seats and restraints. The childminder has relevant car documents available for inspection, although the car insurance certificate does not specify that the childminder is covered for business use. The childminder states she will follow this up, to ensure children's safety is fully protected.

The childminder gives high priority to safeguarding children. She has completed relevant child protection training and through discussion, she demonstrates a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms which would raise a concern. She also has relevant contact numbers available, so she is able to report issues promptly, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

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

The provision is good.

The childminder has completed training courses to develop her knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the early years Foundation Stage curriculum. She is beginning to give them consideration when planning activities for children, which enhances children's learning and development. Children are building close and caring relationships with the childminder. She makes time to listen and takes an interest in what the children say, maintaining eye contact with them and answering them fully at all times. She asks and responds to questions and provides clear explanations. As a result, children's speech and language is developing extremely well.

Children are developing good social skills as they interact positively with adults and peers, both in the childminder's home and in other settings, such as toddler group. They play enthusiastically with small world resources. They are gaining fine motor skills and imagination as they build train tracks or roadways and enjoy driving cars or trains along. They chat about where they are going or recount train stories they have read. They are developing creative skills and learning to use small hand tools, for example, as they use pencils, scissors, glue and collage materials to make celebratory cards. They use plastic bricks to build and construct imaginatively. They enjoy completing jigsaw puzzles, which help them to learn about shape and size. They also play board games which promote number skills and colour recognition, as well as teaching them to share and take turns. They particularly enjoy occasional baking activities, when they measure and weigh the ingredients to make small cakes or biscuits, which they decorate and take home. They also have exciting outings with the childminder, such as visits to the park, the library, the bank and other places of local interest.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel valued because they are treated with equal respect and concern. The childminder knows their individual needs, personalities, likes and dislikes. She is committed to providing for their continuity of care, whilst making their time with her purposeful and enjoyable. Regular outings in the village and surrounding areas are helping children to develop a good sense of community. They are also learning about diversity and the wider world, for example, as they access multicultural resources, look at relevant picture books or listen to stories. Of the children

who presently attend, none have learning difficulties or disabilities. However, through discussion, the childminder demonstrates sound plans to ensure they would be effectively supported and fully included.

The childminder sets high standards for children's behaviour and uses good strategies to reinforce realistic boundaries and expectations. For example, she makes positive use of body language, such as making good eye contact with the child and providing encouragement and purposeful praise. As a result, children's behaviour is generally very good. They are polite and well mannered. They play harmoniously together, taking turns, sharing and having respect and concern for one another.

New children and their parents or carers benefit from introductory visits, during which the childminder discusses and agrees the child's care plan, as well as other relevant details. Information is effectively shared with parents and carers using contracts and agreements, which are drafted and maintained in line with regulatory requirements. The Ofsted poster is not presently displayed for parents and carers, although the childminder advises them when her inspection is due and makes sure they know how to pass on comments or concerns, or the procedure for making a complaint. Informal daily updates are also well used to keep parents and carers informed about their child's care and progress.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an enthusiastic childminder who is committed to ensuring they are safe and well cared for. Adult members of the household are suitably vetted and the childminder provides close supervision, which contributes towards keeping children safe. Premises are well organised and a good range of high quality activities and resources contributes effectively towards children's learning and development. In addition, the childminder supports the children well. Since the last inspection she has attended numerous training courses to ensure she is up-to-date with current legislation and methods of working, such the new early years Foundation Stage. She plans to use her improving knowledge to develop care and learning opportunities for children.

Comprehensive documentation systems have been set up in line with the National Standards. Records are well organised, up-to-date and readily available for inspection. A range of formal policy statements have been drafted and these are shared with parents and carers, to support the childcare. In addition, the registration certificate is displayed in the cloakroom, which informs parents and carers of the childminder's conditions of registration.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of a recommendation raised at the last inspection, the childminder has improved the range of children's resources and learning opportunities which provide positive images of people from different races, cultures and abilities. This helps children to learn about diversity and the wider world.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

In July 2004, Ofsted received a concern in relation to National Standard 2, Organisation. The Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team contacted the childminder. The childminder

provided an investigation response regarding the concern raised. Ofsted are satisfied the childminder remains qualified for registration.

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):

- improve fire safety by installing and maintaining a smoke alarm on the first floor
- provide verification that the car insurance includes cover for business use.

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)