

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	403176
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 January 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 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 registered since 2000. She lives with her two grown up children in a house in Corbridge. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Toilet and hand washing facilities are on the first floor. Minded children do not access any other first floor rooms. An enclosed front garden is available for outdoor play. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the local area, as well as parks, shops and local amenities.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is presently caring for three children aged from one year to three years, as well as two children aged over eight years. All children are cared for on a part-time basis.

The childminder has two pet dogs, to which children have supervised access.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children to, and collects them from nursery or school. She also takes younger children to toddler group.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health requirements are satisfactorily met because the childminder has suitable plans in place. She maintains high standards for home hygiene and ensures suitable arrangements are in place for pets. Children's individual health requirements are adequately discussed with parents and carers. There are sound arrangements for children who take ill whilst in her care and appropriate exclusion periods for children who have a contagious disease. The childminder has suitable arrangements in place to ensure medication administration and accidents are adequately recorded and parents are appropriately notified. However, agreements have not yet been drafted to allow the childminder permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. The childminder has completed relevant first aid training, which enables her to manage children's minor injuries appropriately.

Children are learning the importance of good personal hygiene in keeping themselves healthy. They wash their hands after toileting or before they eat. Older children are learning to manage their personal hygiene needs independently. Babies' nappy changing arrangements are adequately met, although present practices do not consistently minimise the risk of cross-contamination. Children benefit from regular opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play, which promotes their health and well-being. For example, they have daily walks to nursery or school and they enjoy local walks or visits to the park, as well as opportunities to play in the front garden.

There are sound procedures for consulting with parents and carers, to ensure children's individual dietary needs are catered for. The childminder ensures they receive regular drinks and a suitable range of healthy snacks, such as toast and fresh fruit. They also have biscuits as an occasional treat. The childminder sits with the children at snack time, promoting self-help whilst supporting them well. As a result, young children are learning to feed themselves. They are learning to make healthy choices, socialise with one another and use good table manners.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a warm, welcoming environment which is well organised to meet their needs. The comfortable family lounge and the dining area provide children with a spacious and interesting environment. Play areas are appropriately set out. Toys and resources are stored accessibly, in a large toy chest or free standing, to promote children's freedom of choice and independence. As a result, children explore a good range of floor toys and are able to enjoy table-top activities, such as playing with dough or colouring in. Resources and equipment are regularly checked and suitably maintained in a clean, safe condition.

Children's safety is given adequate consideration, both indoors and out. The childminder is vigilant in checking premises and equipment and she takes suitable steps to minimise any potential hazards. Children are appropriately protected regarding fire safety. Smoke detectors are suitably maintained on both floors and a fire blanket is sited in the kitchen. The childminder is able to identify an emergency evacuation plan, which she has talked through with the children to help them realise what to do in an emergency. Children are learning to keep themselves safe, for example, by walking carefully whilst going up or down stairs. When walking out of doors, the childminder encourages them to walk next to her and to use good road crossing drills.

Children's transportation arrangements are appropriately met, although formal outings and transportation agreements are not presently maintained with parents.

Children are adequately safeguarded regarding matters of child protection. The childminder has not accessed relevant training but, through discussion, she demonstrates a basic understanding of issues and is able to identify factors that would raise a concern. She closely supervises the children to ensure their safety and welfare. However, she has no system in place to record children's existing injuries. Present arrangements are not rigorous in ensuring concerns are competently managed, in line with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. As a result, children are not effectively protected.

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

The provision is good.

Children's care requirements are well met because the childminder discusses arrangements with parents and carers. Daily routines are flexible and take good account of children's individual needs, such as rests, meal times and school or nursery runs. Children enjoy a broad range of enjoyable activities that build on their individual interests and extend their learning well. Their self confidence is increasing, as they make independent choices and they are allowed to initiate and develop their play at their own pace. The childminder works effectively with the children, offering support and advice and asking or responding to their questions. This enhances and extends their learning and enjoyment. Children are developing social skills as they form good relationships with peers. They play together cooperatively, sharing and showing kindness, care and concern for one another.

Children enjoy using plastic bricks to design and construct imaginatively. They identify that they have built big trucks, houses and castles. They enjoy using malleable materials, such as dough, which they mould and manipulate into various shapes. They are learning to use cutters and small tools skilfully. They are developing an appreciation for books as they listen to stories or look at picture books with the childminder. They also play board games, which help them to learn about colour, number and shape. They enjoy art and craft activities, such as drawing, painting or gluing. They are developing an interest in music as they perform action rhymes or sing songs together. They particularly enjoy outdoor play, such as using large equipment or playing ball games in the park. They are learning to move around confidently and coordinate their movements. They also enjoy local nature walks, such as going to see the horses and goats. As a result of stimulating learning opportunities, children are gaining skills across all areas of their development. The childminder is beginning to familiarise herself with the early years Foundation Stage curriculum, which she plans to introduce to enhance children's learning and monitor their progress.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. The childminder takes careful account of their individual needs when planning their daily routines. As a result, their continuity of care is appropriately fostered. Children have free choice of equipment, thereby promoting gender issues. They are developing a sound sense of community through regularly walking to school or nursery, going to toddler group, the park or for local walks. The childminder plans some activities around celebrations to help children learn about diversity and the wider world. For example, they paint Easter eggs and make Christmas cards and they taste bean sprouts, noodles

and sweet and sour sauce as they learn about Chinese New Year. They have regular opportunities to contribute towards decisions, such as choosing which fruit they would like for snack, or toys they wish to use. The childminder takes time to listen to them and respects their thoughts and opinions. This gives them a sense of belonging and makes them feel valued.

Children are learning to manage their behaviour well because the childminder uses positive behaviour management practices that are suited to children's levels of understanding and maturity. For example, children are closely supervised and realistic boundaries are set and sensitively reinforced. The childminder also uses appropriate speech and clear explanations, so children know what is expected of them. As a result, they are generally well behaved and show care and concern for each other.

Children's continuity of care benefits from sound partnerships with parents and carers. Introductory visits are used to help the children settle in comfortably. Their usual routines are fully discussed and agreed with parents and carers. Some formal contracts and agreements have been drawn up, but these are not in place for all children. This compromises their safety and welfare. The childminder has her registration certificate displayed, along with contact details for Ofsted. This confirms to parents and carers the childminder's conditions of registration and enables them to report compliments or concerns to the regulator. Suitable plans are in place to record complaints, in line with the National Standards. The childminder states she has formed good working relationships with parents and carers. She uses informal daily discussion, at the beginning and end of the day, to keep them up-to-date with children's care and progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled as a result of regular, but flexible routines and a well organised environment. All children are closely supervised and well supported, to ensure their safety and care. Children's care, learning and play experiences are improving because of the childminder's enthusiasm and positive attitude towards her role. Since the last inspection, she has completed relevant training including first aid, beating bullying and raising awareness of the early years Foundation Stage. She works hard to provide safe, stimulating opportunities for children, whilst fully addressing their individual needs. As a result, children enjoy their time with her and they benefit from rich and rewarding experiences.

Children's personal details are suitably recorded and most other documentation, with the exception of some contracts and agreements, is appropriately maintained in line with the National Standards. The childminder ensures records are securely stored to maintain confidentiality.

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 recommendations raised at the last inspection, the childminder has purchased more toys and equipment, including some multicultural resources. This allows children a wider choice of play and learning materials, which stimulates their interest and motivates them to learn.

## 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:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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 nappy changing arrangements to minimise the risk of cross-contamination
- develop knowledge of child protection issues and devise a procedure to ensure any concerns are recorded and reported in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- improve partnership with parents and carers by drafting and maintaining written contracts and agreements in line with the National Standards.

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)