

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506953
Inspection date	28 January 2008
Inspector	Cathryn Parry
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 was registered in 1991. She lives with her husband and adult son in the residential area of New Hartley in Whitley Bay. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under eight years. She also cares for children aged over eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local parent and toddler group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment, where they are beginning to develop an understanding of good hygiene and personal care. They are encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after the visiting the toilet, as well as using paper tissues to blow their noses on. This is complemented with the provision of individual wash bags that contain

a tooth brush and puppet flannel. The childminder sets a good example as the children watch her clean her hands before she gives them their snack. Records are kept in respect of accidents and medication and these are shared with parents and carers. However, parents and carers do not sign to acknowledge administration of medicines. This could have a detrimental effect on children's well-being. Children do not attend if they are sick, which enables the childminder to protect others from illness. The childminder can respond appropriately if children have an accident as she is trained to administer first aid. She also has written permission in place to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for the children.

Children flourish as they access good opportunities for physical play, including using sit-and-ride toys, a slide, balls and skipping ropes in the garden. The childminder also takes them to the nearby park where they can access larger climbing equipment. The flexible routine incorporates time for quiet play and rest, enhancing children's well-being. Children are encouraged to enjoy healthy snacks and meals. These include scrambled eggs, tuna and mayonnaise sandwiches and fresh fruit. Drinks of water and milk are regularly provided, which quench children's thirst and encourages good lifestyle habits. Relevant documentation with regard to health, including specific dietary needs and consent forms, are in place and up-to-date. These positively safeguard children's well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel secure as the childminder provides a welcoming and safe environment. They are safeguarded well as the childminder's home is secure at all times. This is supplemented with appropriate procedures for adults collecting children. Large glass doors in the dining area enable children to benefit from natural light whilst playing indoors. Children are able to explore safely, using clean and well-maintained resources. Their knowledge about personal safety is encouraged, for instance, with discussions about how to leave the building in the case of a fire. The childminder is vigilant on outings and encourages good practice, such as holding hands and not walking too far ahead. This results in the reduced risk of accidental injury and raised self-awareness. She also provides wrist bands with a contact number on to use in the case of an emergency.

Children experience good levels of supervision and appropriate safety equipment is in place to ensure hazards are reduced. This includes a safety gate, smoke detectors and electrical socket covers. The childminder has attended relevant child protection training in the past and demonstrates a sound understanding of associated issues. This includes having an easily accessible list of relevant contact details. Consequently, children are safeguarded well. All required procedures and documentation are in place to ensure that children's welfare is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relate well to the childminder, as she joins in with their play. They enjoy their time in the childminding environment and are keen to participate in the variety of activities provided. These include building with age-appropriate construction toys, playing musical instruments and completing puzzles. They find the resources fun and sufficiently challenging, which helps to develop appropriate levels of concentration. Children benefit from a flexible routine, including a balance of child-centred and adult-led activities. They have good

opportunities to socialise with others as they attend a parent and toddler group and sit together for meals. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised through the childminder's consistent praise and encouragement.

Effective use is made of the local area giving children a breadth of opportunities. Examples of this are where they visit the museum, library and farm. Children develop mathematical thinking when they use the shape sorter and count during their everyday play. Their communication skills are fostered well, resulting in good interactions between themselves and the childminder. Children delight in using their imagination, for instance, when they pretend to talk to mummy on the toy telephone and blow the baby doll's nose. A variety of creative activities, including painting, stencilling and manipulating play dough, are provided. These encourage children's self-expression and coordination whilst having fun. Children's all-round development is enhanced well as a good range of activities and resources are on offer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well settled in the friendly environment. A short induction period, including visits with parents and carers, enables children to become familiar with the new environment. The gradual settling in procedure ensures children's emotional well-being is met. The childminder's confident approach to equal opportunities actively contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. This is complemented with access to a selection of resources. These include a lovely range of books reflecting people's differences, dolls from other cultures and some dressing up clothes showing different traditions. She also celebrates a range of festivals with children, both within her home and at the parent and toddler group. These represent their own and other cultures, such as Christmas, Easter and Chinese New Year. The childminder does not have any experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, she shows a positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment.

Children receive consistent care as there is a daily exchange of information verbally between the childminder, parents and carers. This is complemented with written diaries and photographs. Consequently, parents and carers are fully informed of the activities their children have participated in. Parental feedback is encouraged in a variety of ways, including the use of questionnaires. This results in the childminder being able to more effectively evaluate her practice. The childminder uses age-appropriate strategies, such as explanations and time out, to effectively manage children's behaviour. Good behaviour is actively encouraged through positive role modelling, meaningful praise and reward stickers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's play opportunities are maximised through the effective organisation of space, time and resources. The use of the living room, dining area and kitchen enable children to play independently or with others. They also have the option to partake in different activities simultaneously. An example of this is where one child enjoys a craft experience in the kitchen, whilst others take part in a board game in the dining area. The flexible routine incorporates time to take and collect children from school, as well as visiting places of interest. The resources are rotated by the childminder in order to maintain children's interest. They are stored at the children's height in low-level boxes to encourage free choice and independence.

The childminder's ongoing commitment to training has a significantly positive impact on the high quality of care provided. This is complemented by her undertaking a quality assurance scheme, which she has nearly completed. Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded as the childminder and other household members have had suitable checks completed. She is aware of her current registration requirements and adheres to them. This has a positive impact on children's well-being. Policies and procedures are in place and individual documentation stored confidentially. This ensures children's well-being and privacy are respected throughout.

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 was asked to develop positive images of race, culture and disability. She was also requested to ensure written parental permission is in place to transport children. She has positively addressed both of these, which has a positive impact on children's well-being.

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 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):

- ensure parents and carers sign to acknowledge the administration of medicines.

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