

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	550071
Inspection date	16 October 2007
Inspector	Karen Marie Tervit
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 2000. She lives with her husband and young daughter in Spennymoor. The whole ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. She is registered to care for six children and is currently minding three children on a part-time basis. The childminder's home is situated close to local shops and amenities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder applies good standards of hygiene to prevent the spread of infection, for example, ensuring food preparation and toilet areas are clean. Children's awareness of good personal hygiene is developing well and they know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They have their own individual towels and drinking cups. Effective procedures are in place which ensure that toys and equipment are kept in a clean, hygienic condition. The

childminder has completed a first aid course to ensure that children are well protected should an accident occur. She has clear procedures in place regarding sick children, medication and accident recording.

Children enjoy varied and nutritionally balanced food; snacks include things like brown bread sandwiches and fresh fruit. Likes and dislikes are taken into consideration, however, children are encouraged to try a variety of different healthy foods. Meals are provided by parents and appropriately stored in the fridge. Children have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

Children benefit from regular walks and visits to the local park which provide good opportunities for physical play and exercise. They especially enjoy meeting other children for picnics in the park or having water fights in the summer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised, safe environment where they have room to move around freely and safely. Premises are warm and welcoming and are friendly to children and parents. They have their own coat pegs, which are at child height. Toys are set out ready for when children arrive and their artwork is attractively displayed on the walls, giving them a sense of belonging. Furniture, equipment and toys are provided to promote children's development and welfare. All are kept clean, are in good condition and toys are attractively presented to children at their level, for example, the hall is set up with a wide selection of books and comfy cushions. This successfully promotes their developing independence. Further toys and equipment are stored so they are easily accessible to both the childminder and the children.

Good steps are taken to keep children safe. For example, all equipment, such as smoke alarms and fire blanket, are in place and the premises are secure. The childminder raises children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe by being a good role model and by explaining about road safety to them and why it is not appropriate to talk to strangers.

Children are well protected and their welfare is appropriately safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of the main areas of child abuse and of possible signs and symptoms

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. Routines have been established that are consistent with home, which promotes children's sense of security and develops their confidence. Warm relationships have been developed; children approach the childminder confidently and with affection and are comfortable in her care, even though they are very new. They make themselves at home and develop good independent skills as they choose from the wide range of resources available; they self select cutters, and mould and shape the play dough or put the pieces into simple puzzles. The childminder praises children and values what they have to offer to help raise their self-esteem.

Children enjoy using a wide variety of resources, such as role play items, games, creative materials and books, which are suitable for their age and stage of development. They make decisions about their play and learning, supported by the childminder who involves herself in their play. A wide range of activities and play opportunities are provided to cater for children's interest. They especially enjoy digging for worms in the garden, making puppets out of pegs or making

fuzzy felt pictures, all with the gentle support of the childminder. Older children write down what they especially like doing and are involved in weekly planning meetings where they decide what they would like to do the following week. The childminder encourages them to think of themselves as a team and make choices about their play.

The childminder is aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is beginning to use it to develop her practice in the care of very young children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are becoming aware of the wider community through playing with a varied range of appropriate resources, including dolls and books which reflect diversity. They have made African masks from paper mache and have recently been learning about different Indian cultures. The childminder actively promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, resulting in all children feeling valued and free from discrimination. Resources are accessible to all children.

Children behave very well. The childminder acts as a good role model and manages behaviour well, promoting children's self-esteem and confidence by giving lots of praise and encouragement. Children have devised their own house rules which are clearly displayed. The childminder sets consistent boundaries for all children and consults with children about the things that make them happy or sad.

Successful relationships are being developed with parents to ensure that the childminder has a good, working knowledge and understanding of the needs of individual children. Daily verbal information is shared effectively and the childminder ensures parents are aware of their child's care throughout the day, including what they have eaten and what activities they have done. Home contact books are successfully used with younger children and photographs and children's artwork are frequently sent home. The childminder clearly displays the Ofsted poster and complaints procedure for parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is promoted in the well organised and safe environment. The childminder regularly attends training to update her knowledge and skills, such as child protection, story sacks and fire safety. She has also begun a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Childcare course. Children are comfortable and at ease with the childminder. She organises her day around their needs. She works flexibly to accommodate parents' working hours.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the National Standards. Policies and procedures ensure that parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress, with each child having their own individual records and lots of useful information available for parents. All of the required records are in place, although some policies and procedures need updating. The childminder's certificate of registration is displayed in the hallway, easily seen by parents and interested parties.

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 agreed to the following: to complete an appropriate first aid course; to obtain written consent for emergency medical treatment and to obtain written consent for outings. The childminder now has an appropriate first aid certificate. She has obtained written consent for emergency medical treatment and to take children on outings. These improvements help to safeguard children.

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):

- develop further the documentation which supports the childminding practice and share this with parents.

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