

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	550106
Inspection date	20 February 2008
Inspector	Andrea, Jane Lockyer

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 has been registered since 2001. She lives with her husband and two children in a semi-detached house in the Chester-le-Street area of County Durham. Local amenities and public transport systems are within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor area is used for childminding purposes. Access to the first floor is restricted to the use of the bathroom. There is a safe and enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. The family has a pet guinea-pig.

There are currently 11 children on roll, two of whom are over the age of eight years, and most attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder receives support and training opportunities from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder follows clear, efficient hygiene routines to protect and promote children's health. Children are aware of the importance of healthy practices, for example, they know to wash their hands before meals and after toileting, clean their teeth, brush their hair and wash their faces. They also enjoy helping to wash toys to keep them clean. The high standards of hygiene maintained throughout all childminding areas and the effective use of policies and procedures ensure that all children are well protected from the spread of infection. In-depth discussions with parents and comprehensive records ensure that children's individual health needs are met well.

Children are very well nourished. Menus are planned in advance ensuring they are offered a balanced and healthy diet. Children are developing a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet. They are able to make choices from a selection of fresh fruit, help to buy fresh produce from the local shops, help to wash and chop fruit for their snacks and play healthy eating games. Children also enjoyed growing their own tomatoes, carrots and pea pods. Children's individual dietary needs are well met through effective partnership with parents to discuss any allergies or special dietary requirements. Children are offered healthy snacks each day and are encouraged to have drinks which are freely accessible to them.

Regular daily opportunities for physical play indoors and outdoors help children to enjoy exercise and develop new skills and healthy bodies. They take part in a wide range of fun activities, such as planting flowers, playing badminton and swing ball, using slides, scooters, tricycles and playing ball games. Children also benefit from daily walks to and from school and going on regular outings to places of interest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe environment where risks are identified and minimised. This allows all children to move around safely and independently. There are good arrangements in place to keep children safe in the event of a fire, however, the fire blanket is not fitted appropriately. The childminder helps children to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, as they practise fire drills, cross roads, use large outdoor play equipment and help to tidy away toys so as not to fall over them. Children are kept safe on outings through the good procedures the childminder has in place.

Children are able to self-select from a comprehensive range of safe, good quality, and developmentally appropriate toys and resources, which are stimulating and fun, promoting independence and choice.

Children are well protected by the childminder who is confident and secure in her knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. A good written child protection policy is in place which is shared with parents, ensuring that they are made fully aware of her role and responsibility to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a relaxed and nurturing atmosphere and children clearly enjoy their time with her. They enjoy affectionate, sensitive and caring relationships with the childminder and each other and are developing high levels of self-esteem, confidence and trust. Children achieve well because the childminder has a clear understanding of their developmental stages, and encourages them to access a wide range of activities and experiences that promote and enhance their individual development and learning skills. She actively seeks children's views about what their interests are and what they like doing through discussion and questionnaires, which are taken into account when planning activities and trips.

All children eagerly engage in a wide variety of stimulating and fun activities, such as making and playing in tents, baking, dressing up, modelling with paper mache, making life size pictures of themselves, fruit printing, making collages from different textured materials and using the 'song and rhyme mat'. They make decisions about their play and learning, supported well by the childminder. Activities and play opportunities are purposeful and developmentally appropriate, resulting in all children being motivated and interested.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to develop a positive attitude towards others and gaining an understanding about the wider world. The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, resulting in all children feeling valued and free from discrimination. Children learn to value differences through sensitive discussions and are receptive to the childminder's good role modelling. They enjoyed taking part in Chinese New Year celebrations where they made lanterns and ate Chinese food using chopsticks. They have access to some resources that reflect positive images of race, culture and disability. However, these are limited. They have good opportunities to learn about their own culture and community as they visit places of interest, such as Beamish Museum, farms, wildfowl park, the coast, local shops and go on nature walks.

The childminder has realistic expectations of children's behaviour. She implements a range of good strategies to promote positive behaviour that help children understand right from wrong, and gives lots of praise and encouragement to ensure that children feel good about themselves. Children respond positively to the childminder, for example, they willingly help to tidy up, share toys and play co-operatively together. They show care and concern for one another and behave very well. Children are encouraged to help draw up house rules which are displayed and used as a reminder for positive behaviour.

Children benefit from the good relationships between the childminder and parents. Good written and verbal communication ensures parents are kept very well informed of all aspects of the childminding practice and the care, welfare and progress of their children. Parents are provided with copies of all policies and procedures implemented by the childminder as well as an annual newsletter. Written comments from parents clearly shows that they are very happy with the care their children are receiving.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The well organised environment and good daily routines ensure that children are happy and well settled. Good opportunities are made for free play, social interaction, resting, eating and going out. This means that children are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The required ratios are maintained and time is organised effectively which results in all children receiving good levels of support according to their individual needs.

The childminder's good knowledge, skills and positive attitude towards extended training enhances the care of children. She has successfully completed the Diploma in Home Based Childcare Level 3. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively to promote the welfare and learning of children and underpin the good quality care.

All policies, procedures and records are shared with parents which contributes to continuity in the children's care, and ensures that their individual needs are met. 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 ensure the first aid certificate is available for inspection, and to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment for each child. Children's health and safety has been improved because the childminder now has written consent from all parents to seek emergency medical treatment for children, and she has an up-to-date first aid certificate.

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 that the fire blanket is fitted appropriately
- develop the range of resources to increase children's awareness of diversity.

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