

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	953196
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Ann Coggin
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 and lives with her husband and three children aged 14, eight and three in Peterlee. The whole of the downstairs of the childminder's home is used for childminding purposes. Children have access to a small rear garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered for five children and is currently caring for two children under five years and three children before and after school. The family pet is a dog.

The childminder is a member of the Peterlee Childminding Network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because they are cared for in a clean family home where the daily routines encourage them to learn good hygiene practices. For example, they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and use paper towels for drying their hands. There are effective measures in place for nappy changing. The childminder

has completed first aid training and maintains a first aid box which protects children should they have an accident. There is a clear procedure in place to record any accidents or medication administered to children ensuring parents are well informed of these aspects of their child's care. All written parental consents are in place. The childminders written sick children's policy is shared with parents and children with an infectious illness are not cared for.

Children are very well nourished by the healthy meals and snacks provided by the childminder. She talks to children about the importance of healthy eating encouraging them to eat foods which are good for them. Children receive a cooked lunch daily which includes either fresh vegetables or pasta. Children enjoy fruit throughout the day and particularly like apples, pears and bananas. Drinks, such as, milk, fruit juice and water are provided regularly to help make sure children are well hydrated and they have their own cups. Any special dietary needs are discussed with parents and recorded before care begins, to ensure children remain healthy.

Children benefit from a wide range of regular opportunities to develop their physical skills. They walk to school daily and visit local play parks to use large outdoor equipment, such as swings, climbing frame and slide. They use sit and ride toys in the childminders garden and at toddler groups and go twice a week to a soft play area to make sure they have opportunities for physical challenge no matter what the weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of health and safety. She checks the house each morning before the children arrive to ensure hazards have been removed. Children benefit from a range of safety measures in place to minimise hazards. A safety gate prevents access to the stairs, entrances to the home are locked and hazardous substances are inaccessible to children. However, low level electrical sockets are not protected and there is no smoke alarm fitted on the first floor. The childminder gives priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, they understand about the rules of road safety, stranger danger and are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures because it has been discussed and practised with them. Appropriate measures are in place for taking children on outings and transporting them in a vehicle. Consents have been obtained from parents and each child has their own car seat.

Children select activities from a range of good quality toys and resources which offer challenge and are appropriate to their stage of development. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises the use of toys to make sure they are safe and used appropriately by the children. Older children know that small parts must be kept out of the reach of the babies and younger children.

Children are protected from possible harm or neglect because the childminder is aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. She holds a number of useful leaflets about child protection including the current Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures to ensure she has the correct information should she be required to make a referral.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy. They develop their play and learning because they are cared for in a homely environment. The childminder understands child development having completed

the 'Birth to three matters' framework training. She plans a range of activities which promotes children's overall development. The childminder knows the children well, their likes and dislikes and she observes how they are developing to share this information with parents. Children are able to make decisions about their play, select activities and develop their interests. They are given time to play and learn independently and benefit from being able to take part in a range of worthwhile and interesting activities. They enjoy activities which contribute to their imagination as they play with 'small world' play equipment, such as cars, garages, train tracks and small world figures.

Children's self-esteem and confidence are effectively promoted because the childminder encourages children to take part in activities in a safe and supportive environment. Children's early communication skills are well supported through good interaction with the childminder as she discusses the activities and talks about what they are doing. Children's understanding of shape, number and colour are naturally encouraged by the childminder during activities, such as using the cars and car mat and the pop-up toys. She is very reassuring to children, listens carefully to what they say and shows interest in what they are doing. The childminder helps children distinguish between right and wrong by encouraging them to share and take turns. Visits to local toddler groups and soft play areas provide opportunities for children to socialise with their peers enabling them to make positive relationships. Children's activities and achievements are shared with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel welcome and at home with the childminder. They are valued and respected as individuals and given opportunities to reach their full potential. The childminder's written equal opportunities policy is shared with parents ensuring children's well-being is fostered. Children learn about diversity through accessing resources, such as small world figures, dressing up clothes and skin coloured crayons and paints. The childminder talks to children about different countries and cultures and provides activities for celebrating festivals. For example, tasting food from around the world and making decorations and cards.

Children behave well as the childminder believes in promoting positive behaviour. There are clear, consistent realistic house rules in place which children understand. The child's age and stage of development is always considered and children receive constant praise for good behaviour, such as sharing and taking turns. Consequently, children develop positive relationships with their peers and the childminder. A written behaviour management policy is in place which informs parents how inappropriate behaviour is managed.

A positive relationship with parents is promoted, through them receiving copies of the childminder's policies and procedures, including her complaints procedure, and written information about the childminding service. Information about children's daily progress is passed on to parents verbally on a daily basis as well as recorded in the individual diaries for pre school aged children. Their art work is sent home to promote their self-esteem. A complaints log is in place which is shared with parents ensuring children's welfare is promoted.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a comfortable and secure child-friendly environment with the childminder providing a wide of play opportunities to meet the needs of young children. The

available space and resources are well organised to promote easy access and children's independence. They are well protected because the childminder ensures that persons who have contact with the children are suitable and where appropriate have been through the vetting procedure. The childminder organises her time to meet the needs of the children attending, resulting in children being confident, well occupied and able to initiate their own play. The childminder is currently working towards an early years qualification.

Policies and procedures are in place, effectively organised and used efficiently to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. All parental consents are in place to ensure children's health and safety is promoted and children's arrival and departure times are accurately recorded. Children's records are kept up-to-date, confidentially stored and are available to parents to ensure continuity of care for their children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure clearance forms for all persons living in the household over the age of 16 are submitted. All adults in the home have been vetted ensuring children are suitably protected. She was also asked to ensure that an accurate daily register is maintained, develop knowledge and understanding of child protection and equal opportunities issues and obtain written parental consent for emergency medical treatment and the transport of children by car. Also to plan a range of activities and play which promote children's overall development and include opportunities for children to socialise with their peers. Documentation has been reviewed to promote children's health, safety and overall development.

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

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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):

- assess the risks to children in relation to low level electrical sockets and take action to minimise these and ensure a smoke alarm is fitted on the first floor.

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