

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284925
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Sharon Greener
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 2004. She lives with her husband, their son and two daughters all adults in the South Hylton area of Sunderland. The whole of the ground floor, except the utility area and the bathroom located on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under eight years. The children attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks children to and from nursery and sometimes transports children in her car. She regularly attends the local carer and toddler group each week. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder ensures that the childminding environment is very well maintained and high standards of hygiene are evident throughout the home. This is achieved through regular cleaning

routines. The childminder presents as a positive role model to the children and they are actively encouraged to adopt suitable personal hygiene practices. For example, hand washing before eating, after visiting the toilet and following outdoor and creative play. The childminder has a clear understanding of related policies and procedures. She is fully aware of the action to be taken regarding the care of a sick child and the administration of medication. Information about children's individual health needs is obtained from parents and carers and recorded. This helps to promote and preserve children's health and welfare.

Catering arrangements are flexible so as to meet the wishes of the parents and carers. The childminder consults closely with them to ensure that any dietary requirements a child may have are very well met. Relevant information is recorded on children's individual personal records. For example, information relating to cultural, religious, medical or lifestyle choices. Healthy eating is promoted and the children are offered a nutritious diet including fresh fruit, vegetables, salads and home-made stews. Babies are fed in keeping with their individual routines and the childminder supports parents and carers during the weaning process. Appropriate drinks, such as, water, milk and juice are provided for the children. This helps promote and preserve children's health and well-being.

Children benefit from fresh air and exercise to enhance their physical development and well-being. Weather permitting, children go for walks and visit parks and green areas. They enjoy playing in the garden and a very good selection of equipment is provided for their use, such as, a swing, climbing frame, a slide, bats, balls and wheeled toys for children of varying ages and abilities. Children are taken on regular outings each week to leisure centres and soft-play facilities. All children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual needs. This helps to promote their physical development and good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has a very good understanding of the policies and procedures to be used to help remove or minimise risks to children. She completes a visual risk assessment of the rooms, resources and equipment to be used before children's arrival each day. This process is ongoing throughout childminding hours and helps to maintain a suitable environment for the children. Childminding areas are very well maintained and used effectively to accommodate children's play. Children are very closely supervised by the childminder and are able to move freely and independently within the constraints of safety. Suitable safety equipment is provided. For example, socket covers, a safety gate, a fireguard, a fire blanket and smoke detectors on each floor. Specific arrangements are in place to accommodate the children until collected by their parent or carer should the home need to be evacuated in an emergency. Parents and carers give their written consent to these arrangements. This helps to keep children safe.

The childminder helps to raise children's awareness of danger and the need to preserve their own safety and that of others. She does this by talking to children and explaining the safety aspects of the ground rules in keeping with their age and level of understanding. Children are very closely supervised by the childminder at all times. During outings she ensures that they stay very close to her and are mindful of matters, such as, road safety and not approaching strangers or animals. The childminder uses appropriate safety aids, such as, wrist straps and reins with very young children. This helps keep children safe.

During the induction process the childminder speaks to parents and carers about the action she would take if she had a concern about a child's welfare. She shows a good awareness of

her responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children. A copy of the recommended child protection literature is available for reference purposes. This helps to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder builds very close, warm relationships with the children and they are most relaxed, happy and contented in her care. She has a very good understanding of their individual abilities and needs. This is gleaned through her ongoing communication with parents, carers and the children and through her own observations of the children. The childminder ensures that children have easy access to an age-appropriate range of purposeful play opportunities and resource. Children are cared for in a very supportive environment where their efforts, abilities and achievements are recognised and praised readily by the childminder. This helps to nurture children's confidence and positive self-esteem.

Children are able to take part in a wide variety of activities and learning experiences, such as, drawing, painting, building with construction-type toys and playing with small world and other imaginative play resources. They are able to take part in activities at their own level and achieve at their own pace. A very good balance of adult-led activities is included in the daily routine for children. For example, story telling, craft activities and outings to places of interest. Children are taken to the Sunderland Winter Gardens and museum, the Life Centre and the Discovery museum in Newcastle and Tweedle farm in Peterlee. These outings help children to learn about their community, the natural and wider world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has suitable understanding of how to promote equality of opportunity and presents as a positive role model to the children. A satisfactory range of resources is provided to help raise children's awareness of diversity. Children have the opportunity to celebrate festivals from other cultures. The childminder discusses relevant matters with older children in a positive manner so as to further promote their understanding of diversity. The childminder shows sufficient understanding of caring for children with a learning difficulty or a disability.

The childminder has very good understanding of behaviour management and has completed relevant training. A written behaviour management policy is shared with parents and carers. Age appropriate behaviour management strategies are used in a calm and consistent manner. For example, distraction tactics are used effectively with younger children and older children are reminded of the boundaries and reasons for them. Children's good behaviour is acknowledged by the childminder and praised. This helps to reinforce and promote such behaviour. Children respond positively to this and their behaviour is very good.

The childminder works closely with parents and carers to introduce children to her care. They visit the childminder a number of times with their children to enable them and their children to become familiar with the childminder, her family and her home. This process of gradual introduction helps children to settle very well. The childminder talks to parents and carers about the policies and procedures she uses and some written policy documents are shared with them. Pertinent information about the children is gleaned from parents and carers and recorded on children's individual records. The childminder uses regular verbal feedback, photographs and compact-discs to keep them very well informed of their child's progress, outings and the events

of the day. Respective parents and carers have access to their child's records and are asked to keep the childminder up-to-date with any relevant information that might impact upon the care of their child. This enables the childminder to ensure that the ever evolving needs of the children continue to be very well met. Written feedback is obtained from parents and carers about the service provided. This is gathered by asking them to complete a written questionnaire every six months. The comments contained in completed questionnaires and various greetings cards given to the childminder by parents and carers were very positive and most complimentary.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a very good understanding of policies and procedures. She uses these effectively to ensure that children are very well cared for and that their individual needs very well met. The vast majority of the required documentation is in place and is organised efficiently and well presented. However, a copy of the 'Addendum to the National Standards for under 8s Day care and childminding' and the contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Boards are not available for reference purposes. The childminder holds a valid first aid certificate.

Good use is made of the space available to provide children with easy access to a wide range of resources and play opportunities to support and enhance their learning and development. They are able to self-select their own activities and materials and this helps to promote and enhance their decision making and independence skills. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the childminder was asked to further develop record keeping systems, to put in place the contact details for the local child protection teams and to develop her knowledge in this area and to obtain a copy of the recommended child protection literature for reference purposes.

An appropriate record of children's attendance is kept. A copy of the recommended child protection literature is available for reference purposes. This helps to improve operational procedures.

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 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):

- obtain a copy of the 'Addendum to the National Standards for under 8s Day care and childminding' for reference purposes
- put in place the contact details for the appropriate Local Safeguarding Children Boards for reference purposes.

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