

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290062
Inspection date	03 October 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 was registered in July 2004. She lives with her husband and two adult children in the village of Horden situated on the outskirts of Peterlee. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear yard for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five part time, and three children over five before and after school. The childminder drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local toddler groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills. They really enjoy their time in the fresh air with planned activities, such as going on nature walks to collect leaves and collecting shells on the beach. They enjoy robust physical exercise daily as they play football,

running games and use large and small climbing equipment. The childminder skilfully interacts to help children master new skills, for example, climbing the steps of the slide and climbing the large climbing frame. Babies have ample space to crawl and safely progress their walking skills. Regular visits to soft play facilities and toddler groups help children to develop their coordination and physical skills. They are able to be active or rest and sleep according to their individual needs and routines.

Children thrive because the childminder has implemented very clear and highly effective hygiene routines to protect and promote children's health. Excellent procedures followed by the childminder results in children being protected from illness and the spread of infection. The exceptional adult support helps children learn the importance of good personal hygiene from an early age. Children learn about germs making them ill, and they routinely wash their hands before eating and after toileting and use their own towels to dry their hands. Consistently high standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the home, ensuring that children are cared for in a warm, clean home. Systems are in place for addressing children's health needs and the effective use of the written sick child policy, which is shared with parents, ensures children are well protected from the spread of infection. The childminder has a current first aid certificate and the recording of accidents and medication ensures children's health and wellbeing. All parental consents are in place.

The childminder provides children with a rich and varied diet. Meals and snacks are nutritious and well balanced and include foods from other countries. Mealtimes are social occasions and all children are encouraged to develop independence skills in feeding themselves and making choices. They enjoy snacks of fresh fruit and meals which are home-cooked using fresh ingredients. The childminder discusses dietary requirements with parents and any specific needs are recorded and catered for. Well planned activities and displays help to promote ongoing conversations about how to stay healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent policies and procedures in place for ensuring children's safety at all times. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where risks of accidental injury to children are minimised. The childminder places a very high priority on children's safety and space is well organised to allow children to move around safely, freely and independently. The childminder understands the need for a good balance between safe limits and independence. Children independently select activities from a wealth of safe, well maintained, good quality toys and resources which meet safety standards. They are regularly checked by the childminder and are well organised to encourage independent access. The childminder carefully supervises the children's choice of toys to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children's understanding of safety issues is excellent as the childminder involves them in discussions about risks and danger. They routinely tidy away toys and do not throw toys around, preventing accidents, and they know some toys can only be used out of the reach of younger children. Children talk about holding hands as they walk along busy roads and know they must stop at the kerbs. Procedures to ensure the safe evacuation in the event of an emergency are very well considered and practised monthly with the children. All appropriate and required documentation, such as medication records, accident records and parental consents, is in place and up-to-date.

Children's safety is further promoted through the childminder sharing her detailed child protection policy with parents. She confidently records existing injuries and discusses these with parents. Her excellent understanding of her responsibilities regarding child protection, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, ensures children's welfare is fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care where routines have been established to promote children's sense of security and develop their confidence. Children enjoy a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities, both inside and outside the home, that extend their learning effectively across all areas of development, for example, visits to the farm, toddler groups and the local library. They play confidently with a broad range of toys and resources. Children's self-esteem is developing as a result of the childminder encouraging and praising them and valuing what they do, with children's artwork being displayed in the playroom. The close and caring relationship between the children and the childminder contributes to the children's sense of belonging.

All children enjoy a good balance of appropriate activities and children are positively encouraged to become independent, for example, when choosing activities and in their personal care. Children spend their time purposefully and confidently and are keen to join in the interesting activities and have fun. These include a range of craft activities, books, role play and construction. Their independence is promoted well through enjoying free choice and leading in their own learning experiences. For example, they thoroughly enjoy singing nursery rhymes whilst playing musical instruments. There are plenty of opportunities for personal conversations, stories and imaginative play. Babies show a high level of interest in what they see and hear around them. They communicate well through sounds and gestures with the childminder, who responds effectively with encouragement and positive interaction.

School age children can be active or rest according to their individual needs and interests. They enjoy trips to places of interest during holidays and have visited children's farms, the beach and Flamingo Land. They play ball games in the nearby park, and indoors play board games and construct with different sized blocks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a written equal opportunities policy, behaviour management policy and special needs statement which are available to parents. All children are welcomed into the childminder's home and participate fully in all activities as they are valued and respected as individuals. Children's needs are well met and their development supported with the childminder acknowledging each child's individuality, and following routines enabling them to feel confident in accepting new experiences. They relate well to each other and are learning to socialise with other children through regular attendance at toddler groups. Children are gaining a clear and positive view of the wider world and have good opportunities to develop positive attitudes towards others through accessing a varied range of resources reflecting diversity.

Children are very well behaved and polite. The childminder effectively supports children and encourages them to share and take turns and play together harmoniously. The good behaviour management strategy together with a range of stimulating experiences has a positive impact on children's behaviour. There are clear and consistent boundaries in place which ensures that

children know what is expected of them. The use of positive strategies for managing behaviour helps children learn to understand right from wrong and promotes children's self-esteem.

The good partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents' views about their children's needs are actively sought before the childminding arrangement commences. Verbal and written information is shared on a daily basis and this enables the childminder to meet each child's individual needs and to contribute towards the continuity of care. Policies and procedures are available in the childminder's information file, although parents do not receive a welcome pack at the time of placement. There is a clear complaints procedure in place in line with recent changes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel settled, relaxed and at home with the childminder. Her excellent organisational skills have been used to create a child friendly and well organised environment, ensuring children are confident and secure in themselves and with the childminder. They can initiate and develop their own play and learning. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. The childminder organises her time well to effectively meet the needs of the children. The childminder shows commitment towards her own personal development by attending relevant training courses and workshops. She has recently completed a level 3 qualification in Childminding Practice.

The childminder meets all the requirements of the National Standards for documentation and record keeping. She displays her registration certificate, insurance details and Ofsted contact details. Documentation which contributes to children's care, safety and wellbeing is well organised and kept secure to maintain confidentiality.

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 provider was asked to improve fire safety by ensuring the fire, when in use, is inaccessible to children. A fireguard is in place to ensure children's safety.

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 the ways policies and procedures are shared 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