

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313451
Inspection date	24 August 2005
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1992. She lives with her husband and two adult children in the Horden area of Peterlee. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom located on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding, and there is an enclosed yard for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time and is currently minding 3 children under 8 years. All but one of the children attends on a part time basis. The childminder transports children to school in her car, and regularly attends the local playgroup. The family has two pet dogs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminding environment is clean and adequately maintained to ensure the children's comfort. Hygiene standards are satisfactory. The childminder has a clear understanding of the

procedure to follow should a child become ill in her care, so as to preserve the child's comfort and welfare.

However, not all of the children wash their hands before eating lunch, and individual hand drying facilities are not provided for the children, so as to help minimise the potential risk of cross infection.

Catering arrangements are flexible to meet the wishes of the parents and children's specific dietary needs and preferences. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure very young children's feeding and sleep routines are maintained. Younger children are supported appropriately when feeding, to develop their self help skills. Meal times are relaxed, social occasions. Healthy eating is encouraged. Children show an awareness of healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables. Information regarding health issues is shared verbally with the parents, for example, the policies and procedures in respect of a sick child and the administration of medication. However, written parental consent is not obtained before administering medication.

The childminder has a sufficient understanding of each child's stage of development. Children are taken on regular outings, providing opportunities for exercise and outdoor play. This enables them to develop and reinforce their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

In general the childminding areas are safe, and children are able to move freely from room to room. Resources and equipment provided are suitable to the ages and abilities of the children placed and are well maintained. Safety equipment is in place to help reduce risks, for example a fire guard, fire blanket and smoke detectors. The childminder completes a daily, ongoing, visual risk assessment of the resources, equipment and the childminding areas. However, hazardous items are kept in the bathroom, and are readily accessible to children. Some children visit the bathroom unsupervised, and could easily reach these items, which are potentially dangerous. This does not promote the children's safety.

A written child protection statement is shared with parents, and the childminder has a satisfactory understanding of child protection matters. The required safety procedures and records are in place. However, these procedures are not implemented effectively. Children are not always cared for or supervised by the childminder in keeping with the requirements of registration. Therefore, the children's welfare is not promoted at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and build good relationships with the childminder. She is aware of and responsive to their individual needs, such as their favourite toys, activities, feeding and sleep routines. The children are well supported and the childminder acknowledges their achievements. She recognises and praises their abilities, for example when counting whilst playing board games, or when attending to their own toileting needs. Children's confidence and self esteem is good. Conversation is encouraged to enhance speech and vocabulary skills, and children make steady progress.

Children are inquisitive and their independence skills are developing appropriately. They are able to self select activities reasonably easily from an acceptable variety of resources. However,

the storage of some resources such as jig-saws is untidy, which limits the children's ability to use them. Children visit places of interest, such as the library, the park and the beach on a regular basis. This enables them to increase their knowledge and understanding of the local environment and the natural world. Younger children are frequent visitors to the local playgroup, providing them with additional opportunities to socialise with other children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed within the childminding environment. They have reasonable access to a satisfactory selection of resources. This includes an adequate selection of resources to aid in the promotion of equal opportunity. Children can make choices and self select activities with relative ease. However, access to some resources could be improved through the reorganisation of storage. There are frequent opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the local environment and the wider world, through regular outings.

The childminder builds good relationships with the children. They respond positively to her and are well behaved. They share toys and take turns readily. Their confidence and self esteem is high. Independence skills are developing appropriately, for example, they choose their own toys. Older children attend to their own toileting needs and use cutlery competently.

Good relationships are fostered with parents. They are told about the childminding policies, procedures and other general information. Some written information about policies and procedures is shared with them, such as equal opportunity, behaviour management, complaints and child protection statements. Insurance and registration certificates are displayed. Parents are kept suitably informed of their child's progress and daily activities, through regular verbal feedback. They are encouraged to keep the childminder up to date with relevant information, so as to enable her to continue to provide appropriate care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Some written policies and procedure are in place and shared with parents. Records are reasonably well organised and the majority are suitably maintained. However, written consent is not obtained from parents in respect of the administration of medication. The need to obtain written consent from parents is a regulatory requirement, to safe guard children's welfare, and ensure the childminder acts in accordance with parents wishes.

Children move freely from room to room and are at ease within the childminding environment. They self select toys and activities with relative ease, from a satisfactory range of resources. All children are taken on regular outings, and younger children are frequent visitors to the local playgroup.

The childminder keeps parents well informed of their child's progress and day to day activities, and encourages them to keep her up to date with information which may impact upon the care of their child. She has attended some relevant training courses to support and further develop her practice. However, the organisation of care, and the childminder's supervision of the children, does not meet the regulatory requirements in accordance with the National Childminding Standards. This compromises children's safety and well-being. Overall the provision does not meet the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection, the childminder was asked to develop the accessibility of records, and the children's access to resources and activities to promote equal opportunity. Records are appropriately stored and are accessible. An adequate selection of resources and activities are provided to aid in the promotion of equal opportunity, so as to develop children's awareness in this area.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that written consent is obtained from parents in respect of the administration of medication
- ensure that the children are supervised by the childminder at all times
- ensure the bathroom is free from hazards and safe for use by children at all times.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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