

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303648
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Annette Stanger

<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 1996. She lives with her husband and three adult children in Stainland. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, including bathroom facilities located on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five all day, on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has a cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association, and is also a member of an approved childminding network.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder is highly successful in promoting all aspects of children's health by taking a range of positive actions. Children are extremely well nourished and enjoy healthy and nutritionally balanced meals and snacks. These are freshly prepared and include vegetables and fresh fruit snacks, such as grapes, apples and plums. Regular drinks are given throughout the day to keep children well hydrated, these include a choice of water or milk. The childminder works very closely with parents to gain a clear understanding of the children's dietary requirements and individual routines. Star charts are used to promote healthy eating and to encourage children to eat a balanced diet. Children also learn about where fruit and vegetables come from as they grow their own, peas, strawberries, courgettes and tomatoes. They then help the childminder to wash and prepare these so they are ready to eat. This helps to promote children's understanding of healthy eating in a practical and fun way.

The children thrive because they are cared for in an exceptionally clean and hygienically maintained environment, with the utmost attention paid to ensuring the cat does not pose a health risk to children. Excellent practice is followed to ensure all precautions are taken to minimise cross-contamination. The childminder follows the latest guidance on infection control and has detailed documentation pertaining to health, including a sick child policy which she shares with parents. Children's awareness of good personal hygiene is successfully encouraged from an early age. The childminder acts as a good role model following consistent routines to maintain excellent standards of hygiene. She offers gentle reminders to children to cover their mouths when they cough, and to dispose of tissues hygienically after blowing their nose. They know to wash their hands after using the toilet, before all meals and after stroking the cat, and do so as part of the daily routine. Facilities for hand washing have been carefully considered to minimise cross infection, each child has their own towel which is easily accessible to them on a peg displaying their name and photograph. The childminder has a dental hygiene policy that she shares with parents, and as part of the daily routine children are helped to understand that brushing their teeth after meals helps keep them healthy.

High priority is given to children's health, physical and emotional well-being, in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. As well as providing opportunities for active play, children are also able to rest and relax according to their individual needs and routines. The childminder takes children out on most days for walks in the surrounding countryside, to ensure they get lots of fresh air. She ensures they take part in regular physical play to support them to grow and develop, make healthy choices and acquire new skills. There is a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their coordination by manipulating a range of objects involving children pulling, squeezing, pressing, poking and pushing, for example when playing with the salt dough. They enjoy moving in a range of ways to their favourite music, as they twist their bodies and jump from side to side, forwards and backwards with their feet together. Children have access to a range of equipment at the childminder's to develop their physical skills, and excellent use is also made of local play gyms and parks where they access fixed equipment so they can practise their climbing and balancing skills. The childminder has an in-depth knowledge of the children's capabilities as she has taken the time to look, listen and note children's development. This means she is able to provide excellent levels of support for children, and assists them in developing their physical strength and skill. The childminder's committed approach is highly successful in promoting children's well-being, healthy growth and development.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder understands her responsibility towards child protection and is aware of the possible signs and symptoms of children at risk. There is documentation in place for recording existing injuries and a written safeguarding policy. The childminder has a sound understanding of the local authority procedures, and how to report if she has any concerns about a child. However, the local contact numbers for reporting are not readily available within the documentation.

The childminder provides a warm and welcoming, child-friendly environment. Children's creativity is displayed for them to refer to and they each have their own coat peg with their photograph and this gives them a sense of belonging. The space is organised well to allow children to freely explore and independently select resources which interest them. They have safe access to toys and resources and these are suitable for their age and stage of development. The childminder checks these regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that may pose a danger to children.

Children are cared for in a safe environment, in which the childminder identifies and minimises risks appropriately. The childminder risk assesses the environment according to the children she has in her care. She takes into account their individual abilities and then puts in place the appropriate safety equipment to safeguard their welfare. The childminder raises children's awareness of safety. She explains to children how to use equipment safely and in the correct way. For example, children are reminded how to hold and use scissors, and that they are not allowed to walk around with them because it is dangerous. All fire safety precautions have been taken, a fire blanket is in place and interlinked smoke alarms are sited on every level of the premises. Procedures for emergency evacuation have been practised with the children so that they become familiar with how to leave the premises quickly and safely in an emergency. Procedures are in place to ensure children are safe when on outings and risk assessments are undertaken by the childminder.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has a superb commitment to providing outstanding care, learning and play for all of the children in her care. She is very enthusiastic in her approach and is highly committed to keeping abreast of the latest childcare developments, in order to continuously improve her practice. She has an excellent understanding of the children's capabilities and interaction is highly effective and successful in helping children enjoy and achieve. She recognises each child as an individual and plans continuously for the next steps in their development. Detailed records are maintained of each child's developmental progress. Each child has their own learning journal, which contains photographs of them in their play and dated observations, linked to 'Birth to three matters' and the foundation stage. Children's next steps are identified at the end of each observation and this information is successfully used to inform the future planning of activities, and to gather information about children's interests. This highly effective approach supports children to enjoy and achieve and make rapid progress.

The childminder makes excellent use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to meet the unique needs of each child and to enrich experiences for children. She ensures they have regular opportunities to be creative and use their senses to explore a range of different textures and materials, for example, cooked and coloured pasta, paint, sand and water. The childminder also involves children in making their own salt dough, and adds lemon to it so the children can use

their senses. At the inspection the children were observed moulding and manipulating the dough to make balls, and used their fingers to poke it and make patterns. Children use their imaginations well in their creativity, for example, they flatten the dough to make a house and then pretend to knock at the door and listen if they can hear anyone inside. The childminder encourages children's counting and language skills during activities, she talks to them about what they are making and helps them to count the number of dough balls they have made. During sand and water play children learn about sinking and floating, volume and weight. Writing materials are freely accessible to the children and they make very good use of these in their play, making meaningful marks and developing their confidence in early writing.

Children are extremely happy and settled in the childminder's care. They receive lots of warmth, care and attention to support their emotional well-being, and this gives them the confidence to try new experiences and acquire new skills. Excellent relationships are evident. It is extremely evident from the childminder's enthusiastic and positive attitude, that she thoroughly enjoys working with children and values all that they say and do. She is calm and caring in her manner and is highly attentive to the children's individual needs. Individual routines are followed to ensure they are consistent with experiences at home. Photograph albums show the excellent range of practical experiences the children enjoy whilst in the childminders care. Superb use is made of the outdoor environment as children go on nature walks, visit the local deer park and canals. They plant bulbs, fruit and vegetables and learn about responsibility as they help to water and care for them. Children also have regular opportunities to socialise with other children of a similar age through regular visits to local playgroups, childminding groups and play gyms.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children behave well in response to the childminder's consistent approach to behaviour management. The childminder manages behaviour positively and sensitively, in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the child. She ensures that children do not become bored or frustrated, but are busy and contented. Explanation is used to raise children's awareness of right and wrong and basic house rules are in place. The childminder follows a behaviour management policy, which she shares with parents and good behaviour is valued and encouraged, and praise is given freely. This positive approach contributes to good levels of confidence and self-esteem.

The children benefit as the childminder follows individual routines in accordance with parents' wishes and this ensures their individual needs are well met. Children are helped to consider and value diversity, through planned activities centred on festivals and resources that reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences, such as books, puzzles and dolls.

Children benefit from the positive partnership that the childminder has with parents. They are confident and settle quickly because the childminder takes heed of the information provided. She has good procedures for settling new children and parents are asked to complete, 'about your child' forms to promote continuity of care, and enable the childminder to meet the children's individual needs. Parents receive good quality information telling them all about the service the childminder provides and the policies and procedures. They receive regular verbal feedback about their child's progress, which is accompanied by a daily sheet for babies, or a learning journal for older children. These detail all aspects of the child's care and development and illustrate the progress they are making with observational notes, and a vast array of photographs and samples of their creativity. This information is shared regularly with parents to keep them

well informed. This successful partnership promotes the children's well-being, care and development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder is extremely motivated and enthusiastic. She uses her time effectively to ensure children are well cared for, supported and are confident in their surroundings. She uses her in-depth knowledge and skills to plan a wide range of exciting and interesting learning opportunities for children.

She demonstrates good commitment to continual development, and regularly attends training courses to extend her childcare knowledge and practice. This benefits the children's care, learning and development.

All of the required documentation is in place and includes the necessary detail, with the exception of the accessibility of local contact numbers for reporting safeguarding concerns. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection actions were raised instructing the childminder to ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times, and to ensure that Ofsted is informed of any significant changes to the premises. Both actions have now been addressed and all of the documentation was available to the inspector at the time of inspection. The childminder has also written to Ofsted about changes to her premises and systems have been put in place to ensure that Ofsted is informed of any significant change.

### **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):

- review the procedures held for child protection to ensure that the local contact numbers are easily accessible for reporting suspected child abuse.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)