

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY311537
Inspection date	28 May 2008
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 satisfactory. 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 2005. She lives with her husband and adult son in Peterlee, County Durham. The whole of the ground floor and main bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and currently has nine children under the age of eight years and one child over the age of eight years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She regularly attends a toddler group and takes children to the local park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming home, where they are generally supported in staying healthy. For example, the childminder has appropriate procedures in place for nappy changing and children wash hands after using the toilet. However, they do not consistently wash hands before snacks, this does not promote good health. A clear sick child procedure and

the effective recording of emergency consents and accidents promotes children's health and well-being. The childminder has clear procedures in place for recording medication, however, these are not consistently implemented to ensure that all records are recorded appropriately and up to date.

Children benefit from regular exercise and fresh air, which contributes to their good health. They go for walks to the park, play on scooters and enjoy playing in the enclosed garden. Suitable arrangements are in place for children to rest, this means that they can rest or be active according to their individual needs.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the importance of providing a healthy diet. Children benefit from home cooked meals which include fresh fruit and vegetables and have constant access to drinks of water or milk. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that she is aware of any dietary needs of the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Appropriate procedures and safety equipment ensure that children are able to play in a safe and secure environment. For example, external doors are locked, sockets covered and stair gates are in place. However, the garden gate is not locked when unattended babies are asleep in the garden in their pushchairs. This does not effectively safeguard children. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe as the childminder has effective procedures in place. For example, they practice regular fire drills and benefit from gentle reminders from the childminder to tidy up so that they do not trip and hurt themselves. A well maintained range of toys and resources are available for the children to self-select from. The childminder ensures that the toys are clean, in safe condition and suitable for the age of the children.

Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder has suitable procedures in place. Young children are securely strapped into pushchairs while older children hold the childminder's hand and all appropriate consents are in place. Children are suitably protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and has information in place to ensure that she would be able to deal with any concerns appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and happily participate in a good range of activities provided by the childminder. A flexible routine enables children to make choices about play and ensures that children benefit from indoor and outdoor activities. For example, at home they enjoy playing with cars and take part in a range of activities which promote their creative development, such as dressing up, exploring play dough and arts and crafts. Visits to local toddler groups and to the library to join in with song and story sessions provides good opportunities for children to socialise with their peers.

The childminder interacts well with the children, she is fun and gets involved in all aspects of their play. They laugh and giggle with her as she is affectionate with them and takes an interest in their play. Children's development is promoted through good use of questioning by the childminder, for example, she encourages number and letter recognition. Such learning is reinforced by lots of praise and encouragement from the childminder, this promotes children's self-esteem and confidence. As a result, children are happy and settled in her care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and treated equally by the childminder who is attentive to their needs and ensures that all children are involved in activities. Children have good opportunities to learn about their local environment as they visit local farms, enjoy story sessions at the library and go for walks to feed the horses. Good resources are in place to promote children's awareness of the wider world. However, the childminder does not plan any activities to further support this. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is committed to working with parents and other professionals to ensure that she is aware of any individual needs.

Effective age appropriate techniques are in place to help children begin to learn right from wrong. For example, the childminder removes young children from the situation and uses time out and discussion with older children. She acts as a positive role model to the children, encouraging them to share and to be polite and intervenes appropriately to distract children when they begin to argue. As a result, relationships are good between the childminder and the children as they are natural and spontaneous. Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and parents, who speak highly of the care that their children receive. Parents receive informative information packs when they first start and the childminder gathers all relevant information required to meet the individual needs of the children. Verbal feedback and two way diaries ensure that parents are kept informed about their child's care and promotes consistency of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an appropriately organised home where they are safe and secure. Toys and resources are effectively organised, enabling children to access a good range independently and make choices about their play. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out appropriately to support play opportunities for children. Flexible daily routines ensure that children receive a suitable balance of indoor and outdoor activities.

The childminder is suitably qualified and experienced to care for children of all ages and children benefit from knowledge gathered from further training. Most records which are required for the safe and effective management of the provision are in place, however, not all records are up to date. The childminder's registration certificate is clearly displayed and all adults have undergone all relevant checks to effectively safeguard children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, recommendations were raised to provide children with healthy snacks, increase the childminder's understanding of child protection issues, ensure that sleeping children were safe in the garden and to consider using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan play activities for the children. The children benefit from a range of healthy meals and snacks and the childminder has a clear understanding of child protection issues. The garden gate has been made secure, however, it is not locked which means that sleeping babies are not kept safe. This has been raised as a recommendation again. The childminder has a suitable understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and children benefit from a good range of activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 2 (Organisation). An Ofsted inspector visited the provision on 10 July 2007. An action was raised relating to National Standard 2 (Organisation), which was satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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:

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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):

- implement procedures to ensure that all documentation is up to date and stored consistently
- keep sleeping babies safe by ensuring that the garden gate can be locked
- develop activities to promote children's awareness of other cultures and diversity.

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