

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY361768
Inspection date	23 July 2008
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar

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 outstanding. 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 September 2007. She lives in the Ingleby Barwick area of Stockton-on-Tees with her husband and her daughter aged five years. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, along with two first floor bedrooms. Children have access to an enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. There is currently one child on roll aged 19 months old.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because their physical, nutritional and health needs are very well met as a result of effective procedures and practices employed by the childminder. Children enjoy an excellent range of activities and experiences indoors, outdoors and away from the childminding setting

which actively contribute to their very good health and well-being. They are cared for within a very well maintained and hygienic environment. The childminder employs very effective and thorough hygiene routines and procedures, which ensure children are kept healthy at all times. Very effective procedures are in place in relation to the personal hygiene and hand washing of the childminder and minded children. Very effective nappy changing procedures are also in place with the childminder wearing disposable gloves to prevent the risk of cross-infection. A comprehensive written sickness policy, which is shared with parents, ensures all children are cared for within a very safe environment which is free from infection. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate, has a well stocked first aid box, the contents of which are checked regularly, and she takes a first aid kit with her on all outings, ensuring children's well-being should an accident occur. Robust systems are in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication. Detailed, written policies are shared with parents, outlining the effective hygiene practices used by the childminder to promote children's health.

Every day children benefit through either a planned or spontaneous activity to promote their physical well-being. They are encouraged through the childminder's infectious enthusiasm and admirable energy to provide very good opportunities for physical activity. Children benefit from an extensive range of activities which promote their physical development and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy playing in the childminder's garden where they can run freely, manoeuvre wheeled toys, or climb on the slide which challenge their physical skills. Particular favourites are games of golf and playing with footballs. Outings to the park, walks locally and trips to the swimming baths encourage children to develop a positive attitude to exercise. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and daily routines. Regular opportunities are made available during indoor and outdoor play for children to develop and build upon their existing good skills and range of physical abilities. Children develop a range of small physical skills as they competently shell peas from pea pods. Young children are developing hand-eye coordination and finger control as they feed themselves and play with a range of equipment in the sand and water tray.

Children's care is exceptionally well fostered through highly considered routines. Individual and personal information is discussed to ensure health and medical needs are identified and adhered to and recorded thoroughly in excellent documentation. The childminder plans an excellent range of highly nutritious meals and snacks. She is very successful in meeting children's individual dietary requirements. Mealtimes are highly enjoyable social occasions, which are used extremely successfully to encourage social development and independence skills. The childminder creatively encourages children to make healthy choices, for example, they grow strawberries and vegetables. Well-planned activities and displays help to promote ongoing conversations about how to be healthy. Menus are carefully planned to help children appreciate a wide variety of tastes and textures, including lots of foods from other countries. The childminder is very proactive in her approach to keeping abreast of the latest food hygiene guidance. Children access drinks on a regular basis throughout the day. The childminder liaises closely with parents and carers regarding meal provision, allergies, preferences or needs on religious grounds. A daily diary containing details of the children's food intake is given to parents each day and the menu is also displayed for parents information.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are really well cared for in an exceptionally welcoming, safe and secure home environment. The childminder uses the available space in her home to provide a flexible domestic environment which serves their particular needs. Children are able to move around and play

safely, freely and independently because the childminder has identified and minimised all risks, expertly balancing freedom for the children and setting safe limits. All domestic safety measures are in place, including electrical socket covers, a fire blanket in the kitchen, and mains operated smoke alarms on both levels of the house. The childminder safeguards children's welfare and has all of the required policies and documents in place. When out walking, children wear wrist bands with contact details, and the childminder always carries parents emergency contact details with her. Excellent practices actively contribute to the safety of children, such as thorough informal risk assessments, extensive and detailed emergency evacuation procedures and frequently practised fire drills.

Children can readily access equipment, toys and resources independently and safely because the childminder has thoughtfully furnished her home with the promotion of children's independence in mind. Children make their choices from baskets contained in low-level storage table and units. The childminder has pictures of her toys and equipment and stuck them into laminated 'Choice Books'. This enables younger children to convey their choices about toys by pointing to the pictures. Toys and equipment are safe, suitable, stimulating and challenging. The childminder checks the toys on a regular basis and any damaged toys are removed from use immediately for disposal or repair. She checks packaging to see what age range the toy is designed for and checks all toys for small parts. Children are only given toys to play with that are suitable for their age. The childminder chooses toys that are bright in colour to give visual stimulation and has a variety of 'treasure baskets' and boxes containing plastic and wooden toys for their different tactile qualities.

Children are very safe with the childminder, who has a robust knowledge and understanding of child protection in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. She has attended appropriate training courses and keeps informative documentation to which she can refer for guidance at any time. She has a clear and effective written policy that is shared with parents. They are given a copy of the policy and are asked to sign acknowledging their understanding of it. This ensures that the child is the main priority at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and make excellent progress in all areas of their development. They are very settled and extremely happy. They benefit greatly from a very warm and affectionate relationship with the childminder which gives them the security to approach the world with confidence and enthusiasm. They share a close and warm interaction, with cuddles, smiles and spontaneous gestures of affection. Children are motivated, eager and actively participate in and enjoy the activities and experiences offered to them. The play environment is calm and inviting and the daily routine gentle and relaxed, allowing children to absorb experiences at their own pace. They are busy and contented. The childminder makes learning fun, as she provides a wealth of highly enjoyable experiences, which support and challenge children's development. She knows them extremely well and is highly attentive to their individual needs. She has daily conversations with parents, to ensure planning of activities is based on their interests. The childminder takes professional pride in constantly developing and extending her high quality service through attending training courses and working with her local authority.

Children are highly enthusiastic and inquisitive because the childminder provides a very wide range of purposeful and well-planned activities. They eagerly explore and enjoy the stimulating environment, selecting resources, planning their own play and pursuing their own interests.

The balance between adult and child-led activities is excellent, allowing children time to explore independently. They relish their time spent absorbed in imaginative, sensory and exploratory experiences. For example, they are fully engrossed in water play, filling and emptying buckets. They enjoy a whole host of mark making activities both indoors and outdoors using materials, such as chalk, water and brushes. Children currently enjoy activities outdoors, such as washing the dolls and their clothes, and pegging them on the line. They are absorbed as they cut and roll play dough to make models. They enjoy treasure baskets filled with natural materials, sensory activities with cornflakes, 'gloop', compost and shaving foam with glitter. Activities also include opportunities for children to develop early problem solving skills, such as matching jigsaws and different shapes. Stories are particular favourites and the childminder regularly takes children to the local library and makes excellent use of 'story sacks' to promote young children's language development. The childminder is very skilled in encouraging young children to express themselves. Although the children she currently cares for are under two years of age, she constantly talks to them, asking them questions, giving them instructions and encouraging them to explore. The children clearly understand what is being said and respond in their own way trying to communicate with her. Children's creative development is fostered very well, they thoroughly enjoy playing with small world equipment and play is based on first hand experiences, such as ironing the clothes. They also explore music and sounds with an extensive range of musical instruments.

Children are offered an extensive range of different play experiences and activities on a regular basis which enables them to learn new skills and consolidate existing ones. For example, children attend a variety of child-centred settings away from the childminding premises. These encourage the development of social skills. They have also enjoyed trips to the beach to explore as an extension to the current theme of water. The childminder has detailed written planning in place based around children's individual interests. The quality of toddlers' learning experiences is enriched by versatile activity planning and assessment based upon early years curriculum. The childminder uses detailed observations of what children are doing to enable to plan the next stages in their development. Detailed records of children's achievements are documented in daily diaries including photographic evidence. Records are shared with parents daily.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly respected as individuals. They quickly settle in to the setting and make positive relationships with the childminder and her family. Children feel a secure sense of belonging as they enjoy fruitful induction visits with their parents. They enjoy an interesting and stimulating range of activities and resources which are highly effective in helping children appreciate and value diversity. An extensive range of multicultural resources include dolls and small world equipment. A range of books show how children in other countries live and play, explaining about their cultures and traditions. Children learn to appreciate and respect others' similarities and differences through an excellent range of planned topics and activities, for example, Chinese New Year celebrations, when children ate Chinese food, wrote their name in Chinese script, and enjoyed varied craft activities. The childminder celebrates children's birthdays and other special events, such as Easter, Fathers Day and St. Georges Day. Recently, children took part in a sponsored 'sing along' to raise money for charity. This enables children to develop their awareness of their own community and the needs of others. Children's natural curiosity and questions are dealt with in a sensitive and considerate manner. The childminder's written equal opportunities policy and practice ensures children's equality of opportunity. Although the childminder has no experience of providing care for children with learning difficulties or

disabilities, she is well informed and knowledgeable about children's developmental stages. The childminder has attended relevant and recent training courses concerning special needs. Consequently, she feels able to approach parents if she is concerned about children's progress and obtain appropriate support to ensure that they can make progress.

Children behave exceptionally well in response to the clear boundaries set by the childminder. She keeps the children busy with purposeful and stimulating activities and uses effective distraction techniques to manage any tantrums or challenging behaviour. The childminder does not compromise her high standards and expectations of conduct and behaviour. Children learn to make choices, take decisions and develop a marked respect for their childminder and others. They are rewarded with substantial praise and encouragement.

An excellent partnership with parents promotes very good continuity of care for children. A comprehensive information booklet, policy and procedure file, and detailed records ensure that all relevant information is shared and detailed consents obtained. Parents are fully informed of their child's day through informal chats and a detailed written diary which includes photographic evidence of the days activities. The childminder actively seeks feedback from parents, inviting them to write comments in the diary. Parents' comments show their appreciation of the excellent service they receive.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care and welfare is significantly enhanced by the professional attitude and commitment the childminder has to her business. Their very high quality care is enhanced by the childminder's superb organisation, and high level of skills and knowledge. She is committed to excellence, seeking to further develop her expertise and knowledge in order to improve her practice. She continues to identify her training needs, as she prepares for forthcoming developments in children's care and learning. The childminder organises her home to be welcoming and very child friendly. Well organised storage gives children the space to explore activities and make choices, giving them a high level of input into their experiences. They thrive as they take part in an excellent range of indoor and outdoor activities, giving them a balanced and interesting day. A flexible routine allows children to be active or to rest as they need.

Children's care is promoted through the detailed documentation with regard to the outstanding organisation of the childminder. She has systematically added to the already substantial policies and procedures to address all areas within the National Standards for Childminding. The childminder's portfolio evidences her commitment to providing good quality care for children. As well as extensive and well written policies and procedures, which are a true representation of the first rate practice of the childminder, she has established clearly considered, ongoing self-evaluation systems, so that she very effectively evaluates her own practice. All necessary documentation is completed correctly, is up-to-date, reviewed regularly and is kept securely to maintain confidentiality. The information is discussed with parents, demonstrating that appropriate individual care is provided for each child which ensures their well-being and progress.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 outstanding. 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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