



## Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	311657
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 December 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Kathleen Snowdon

<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 lives with her husband and their two children aged 11 and 15-years-old, in Blaydon, Gateshead. Her home is close to all facilities including schools and nurseries. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there are fully enclosed front and rear gardens for outside play.

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and is a member of the National Childminding Association. Originally registered in 2000, the childminder has current arrangements for five children. Two of these are aged 6 and 11-years-old and are cared for on an after school basis. The other three children are

looked after on a full time basis and are aged 1 and 2-years-old and 11 weeks.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children move freely and confidently around the childminder's well-organised home. They walk safely through spaces and over small obstacles, such as books and other play items, to help them to gain increasing control of their bodies and to develop an awareness of space. They are encouraged by the supportive childminder to exercise. For example, when they visit a soft-play centre. This helps them to make good progress in their physical development and boosts their confidence in their own physical ability. The children approach familiar adults confidently and spontaneously, with the certainty that they will be acknowledged. This helps them to feel secure and valued and encourages the growth of self-esteem.

The children handle a range of bright and stimulating equipment, such as "activity centres". Exploring items like these provides them with opportunities to improve their fine manipulative skills and their hand-eye co-ordination. The children go on short outings such as, trips to the local park and for walks in the semi-rural locality. This encourages the children to appreciate being outdoors and provides them with the opportunity to enjoy fresh air. The children have regular naps to help them to feel comfortable and contented. Their wellbeing is protected by the frequent checks made on them by the childminder as they sleep.

The children eat appetising and nutritious snacks and meals, such as fruit, baked potatoes and yoghurt, with increasing independence; these are supplied and prepared by the childminder. This encourages the development of a healthy approach to eating and helps the children to understand their own capabilities, as they grapple with knives, forks and spoons. Sensible practices, such as washing food preparation surfaces with warm soapy water before and after use, keeps the environment hygienic. Alongside of this, there are highly appropriate arrangements in place to deal with children who are ill. This minimises the risk posed to the children from infection and common illnesses.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well protected through the childminder's conscientious approach to health and safety matters. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised by the secure, very well-organised home environment, which allows them to move around freely and safely. Their access to potentially hazardous areas, such as the staircase, is controlled by the use of safety gates. This helps to ensure that the children remain within sight of the childminder. Fire guards block off fireplaces and safety covers protect otherwise exposed electric sockets. Such sensible precautions prevent the risk of accidental injury to the children.

Children access good quality toys with ease. These are in good condition through regular cleaning and checking by the childminder. The toys are judiciously placed, on the floor for instance, to reduce the potential risk posed to the children, by having to stretch or reach too far for items of interest. The children sit in sturdy, well-maintained prams, car seats and high chairs, to ensure that they remain secure during outings and meal times.

Well thought out evacuation procedures and regular checks on smoke detectors help to ensure that the children remain safe, even in emergencies. The children's continuing safety and welfare are further protected through the childminder's good awareness of child protection issues. Very good links have been forged with the children's schools and other childminders. This ensures that the children remain safe in the unlikely event of the childminder being unable to collect them.

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

The provision is good.

The children take part in an interesting range of activities, such as painting, cooking and craft activities. These help the children to develop good manipulative skills and give them the opportunity to handle ingredients and materials and explore their properties. Good quality resources, such as dolls, dressing up clothes and other props encourage the children to use their imagination and have fun pretending during role play. The older children enjoy pretending to be childminder to the younger children, who are very happy to comply.

The children trust and approach known adults confidently. For example, when they need reassurance or comfort. This teaches the children how to build strong and secure relationships with others. They interact very well with other children. This teaches the children to co-operate and helps the development of effective social skills. The children carry out a range of simple tasks independently and with growing competence. For instance, during mealtimes when they help to feed themselves. This promotes increasing independence and self-confidence.

The children show strong levels of interest in their surroundings and in other people, such as visitors. Their curiosity is encouraged by the skilled childminder who capitalises on opportunities to promote the children's social development. The well-balanced daily routine regularly includes short trips to the park, where the children have the opportunity to become familiar with the community in which they live. They collect leaves with which to make leaf prints or collages and they observe the changing colours of the countryside as one season moves on to another. This promotes their knowledge and understanding of the wider world in which they live.

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

The provision is good.

The children form secure relationships with the childminder, demonstrated in the affectionate way that they interact with her. This enables them to understand that

they are valued and cherished as individuals and encourages the growth of self-esteem. They readily seek the attention and solace of adults, for instance, when they are hungry or tired. This teaches the children to trust other people and gives them an insight into their own needs. The childminder's good behaviour management technique helps the children to learn that negative behaviour brings no reward. For example, when they squabble over a toy. Her sensible and very clear guidance sets the scene for the development of the children's understanding of right from wrong.

The children are learning how to behave around and react towards other people through good role modelling by the childminder. They are pleasant, happy and contented. This helps them to acquire social confidence and gives them the necessary skills with which to form friendships. They hear the childminder's respectful opinions about people who are different from the majority. This gives them positive views of gender, disability, ethnicity and culture. The children visit places of interest within their local community, such as the park and local shops. This helps the children to understand that they are part of a wider world and increases their awareness of how nature works.

Partnership with parents is good. This ensures that the children are looked after in accordance with their parents' wishes. Informative dialogue takes place between the childminder and parents at the end of each day. This keeps parents fully informed about the things that their child has experienced during their time with the childminder. In addition, the childminder records significant events, such as nappy changes, feeds and naps, in a notebook and shares these with parents. Contracts are used which set out clearly the expectations of both parties to ensure that the children are looked after in a pleasant and harmonious atmosphere. Parents have very positive views of the childminder whom they describe as " kind, caring and conscientious".

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children's needs are fully met through the childminder's very good knowledge and understanding of child development. As well as this, her good understanding about the importance of ensuring that registered numbers are not exceeded means that the children remain motivated, safe and secure while in her care. This is complemented by the well-organised environment, which enables the children to move around freely, but gives them sufficient scope for adventure too.

Well-organised records, which contain all essential information, are reviewed regularly to ensure that the information remains up-to-date and accurate. This underpins the childminder's effective practice on a day-to-day basis. The childminder strives to improve. For example, she wants to find out more about the Birth to three matters framework to improve her practice with children under 3 years old.

The childminder's sound regard for the children's individual preferences ensures that they feel valued and special. She is a good role model and teaches the children to respect themselves and other people. The well-balanced daily routine incorporates quiet and busy times to ensure that children benefit from a range of experiences, to

help them make progress in all areas of their development. The solid partnership between parents and the childminder ensures that the children's needs are as fully met as possible. As a result, the children are happy, secure and contented.

Overall, the childminder is effective in meeting the needs of the children who attend.

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

Since the last inspection the childminder ensures that parents are kept fully informed through daily discussions. In addition to this, she makes notes of significant matters, such as when babies have been fed and the times of nappy changes and sleeps.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report. 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):

- become familiar with the Birth to three matters framework.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)