



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271663
Inspection date	16 December 2005
Inspector	Jim Bostock

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 2003. Children are cared for at her semi-detached home in Blyth, Northumberland. Children have access to a lounge, kitchen-diner and bathroom on the ground floor and the front garden is used for outdoor play. The premises are within walking distance of Blyth town centre, local bus routes, local shops, a toddler group, a playgroup, local nurseries and schools, Sure Start, the park, the beach, the library and the leisure centre. The childminder lives with her daughter aged 10 years. One cat is kept as a pet. At the time of inspection there were two children on the register. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and hygiene is well promoted through the childminder ensuring that daily routines include washing hands before eating and after toileting. She has good nappy changing procedures to ensure children are safeguarded and has individual towels and liquid soap dispensers to reduce the risk of cross infection. The children's access to the cat is well supervised and effectively managed to protect children. Accidents and medicine administered are well recorded and shared with parents.

Children receive a balanced and healthy diet including the provision of fruit, snacks and drinks each day and the childminder has attended training on healthy eating to ensure she has a good understanding of the nutritional needs of children. Children's individual dietary needs are recorded and reflected in the meals and snacks provided. Parents provide food for babies and the childminder ensures she is aware of any allergies to food. This good communication between childminder and parents about food and drink issues benefits the children, and the childminder fully respects any requests from parents. Children have easy and constant access to drinking water within the playrooms.

Children's physical development is promoted through regular use of the outdoor area where they have access to large play equipment and outdoor activities. Children enjoy regular outings, walks and visits to interesting places such as toddler groups, soft play and the local park. The childminder helps babies development well by providing good physical support so that they can develop their muscles in a safe and comfortable way.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment which is safe and well maintained. Their safety is well promoted within the home as the childminder takes good precautions to remove any risk to children. For example, she ensures safety gates are in place to prevent access to the stairs and dangerous items are stored safely out of reach of children. Children are helped to learn about safety well, for instance, they learn about road safety and about moving safely within the house. Risk assessments are used by the childminder to help keep children safe and she maintains close supervision of children to help prevent accidents. The childminder has a good awareness of fire safety and has made provision for a safe and efficient evacuation, including good written plans.

The childminder has a good awareness of the issues involved in protecting children from abuse and has written guidelines to help her protect children should any issues arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and achieve well because she is skilled and has a good understanding of the age and stage of development of the children who attend. Children are helped to settle well because the childminder is sensitive towards their individual needs. The childminder gives children good support to help them make progress. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them to develop a strong sense of self. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult-child interactions. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in with a diverse range of interesting activities and experiences. For example, the childminder takes children to the "Chatterbox Challenge" where they sing, dance and learn new words that enhance their vocabulary. Children are interested in their play and the childminder has a good awareness of their development, likes and dislikes. Their progress is well supported by regular discussions with parents. Although the childminder is aware of Birth to three matters and is planning to attend training, it is not yet used to support children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's behaviour is good. The childminder helps children to learn to share and take turns. They learn to relate to others and get on well with each other. The childminder uses her knowledge and understanding of children's behaviour to support their progress and uses praise and encouragement very well to help them develop self confidence, independence and a sense of responsibility. The management of the behaviour of older children is an issue which the childminder acknowledges needs further development.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the setting because the childminder values and respects their individuality and the family context for each child. The childminder has an appropriate awareness of children with special needs to enable her to provide them with support to participate fully in the activities. The childminder provides some toys and activities which reflect positive images of diversity to help children develop an awareness and a positive attitude towards difference.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to the children's well-being. Parents views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time there. The childminder ensures that parents know how their child is progressing and developing as she makes good use of a daily journal to keep them updated. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in the care and activities which contribute to their good health, development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder provides clear routines and organised activities to give children confidence. The childminder has attended many training courses in childminding practice, and has a good commitment to ongoing training, which ensures children are well cared for. The well planned daily routine and well resourced service allows children to experience a wide variety of stimulating and interesting activities.

The documentation kept enhances the care provided by being both relevant and well organised. The childminder keeps very good records which are securely stored to ensure confidentiality. She has written information about each child so that the care of children is well based. There are written contracts and consents in place for minded children. All the information is easily accessible to parents. The childminder has current public liability insurance cover and a current first aid certificate so that children are well protected. She displays her certificate on the wall as is newly required.

The service meets the needs of the children attending.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop her knowledge of child protection issues and obtain appropriate written consents from parents. She has obtained a guidance booklet on child protection which has helped her to develop her knowledge, and she plans to attend training in child protection in the near future. She has obtained written consents for transporting children in vehicles and for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

Complaints since the last inspection

A concern was raised against National Standard 2 - Organisation. Social Services visited the provider and Ofsted made a visit to the provision. The concerns were discussed with the provider. The provision was found to be complying with the National Standards and remains qualified for registration. 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

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The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- develop knowledge and understanding of Birth to three matters
- develop resources and activities which show positive images of difference.

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