



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY311537
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Jean Wilson

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 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 is currently minding two children on a full-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She regularly attends a carer/toddler group and takes children to the local park.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her home to be welcoming to children. Their health is promoted through satisfactory hygiene practices. For example, appropriate nappy changing procedures and the consistent wiping of surfaces after eating. Regular cleaning routines ensure that children play in a hygienic environment which minimises the risk of infection. Children's dietary needs are appropriately met as information is shared well between the childminder and their parents. Arrangements are flexible and some families choose to provide meals and drinks for their child. The childminder has sufficient understanding of the nutritional needs of children to offer them a balanced diet. However, on occasion, babies and toddlers are offered sweet biscuits as snacks with no healthy alternative.

Children have regular opportunities for physical play and frequently visit the local parent and toddler group and local parks. Within the home there is clear space to play and babies are able to move about freely using activity walkers or roll and explore safely on the floor. They are effectively encouraged to develop their large motor skills. For instance, supported by the childminder, they delight in climbing up and over the sides of a low ball pool.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children confidently play in a child friendly and spacious environment on the ground floor. They are cared for in a home where most risks are identified and minimised. Visual checks of the premises and toys are undertaken daily to maintain a safe environment. This enables young children to investigate their surroundings, under the childminder's watchful eye. Suitable equipment is in place to promote their safety indoors, such as, a stair gate and fire blanket. However, the garden gate is not secure when babies sleep, unattended, in their pushchairs outside.

Young children are able to self select from a good variety of safe and appropriate resources suitable for their individual stage, encouraging their independence. When taking children out into the community their welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the childminder's understanding of how to keep children safe. However, she has limited knowledge of what procedures to follow if she had concerns about a child or if an allegation was made against her or a member of her family.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are very happy and secure in their surroundings freely moving around to access equipment. They relate to the childminder warmly and happily approach her for support. They are held physically close and receive lots of cuddles and

encouragement to explore their playthings. The childminder promotes language development well through her constant interaction and conversation with the children. Toys are rotated to provide children with interest and to develop particular skills, such as, posting and stacking. The childminder is involved in their play and their achievements are readily acknowledged and praised. Although the childminder has a satisfactory awareness of children's development she has not fully extended her activities to promote and plan for young children's progress. For example, by using the Birth to three matters framework.

The childminder strives to know the children well and, through ongoing discussion with parents and observation, she gains an awareness of their individual needs. She is able to alternate equipment to suit these, such as, using push along toys to promote mobility in babies. Children have a clear structure to their day which includes regular opportunities for walks, outings to local resources and social contacts at toddler groups. While no older children are currently minded, the childminder is able to discuss how themed craft activities would be available to them, in addition to free play and outdoor activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and their individual routines, such as, eating and sleeping, are fully taken into account. They develop a strong sense of belonging and trust through positive and regular interaction with the childminder. She provides a positive role model and young children learn to show consideration for others in a warm and caring environment. Books and toys are selected to reflect diversity and present a positive image of the wider world.

Young children begin to understand responsible behaviour by the use of appropriate methods suitable for their stage of development. The childminder has a gentle, kind and consistent approach which includes talking to children and helping them to understand how the hurt person feels. Toddlers begin to understand that they need to share and say sorry. Minor incidents of unacceptable behaviour are soon forgotten as they play happily together. The maintenance of familiar routines and the childminder's awareness of the negative effects on behaviour of factors, such as, boredom or tiredness, enables her to avoid them. She creates a stress-free atmosphere for children where displays of unacceptable behaviour are limited.

The childminder has established friendly and professional relationships with parents and she works closely with them to ensure that there is continuity of care for children. She complies with parent's instructions on individual routines, such as, children's different sleep times. Parents know how children spend the time as the childminder gives regular feed-back at collection time. She also keeps a daily diary for parents, written from the child's perspective. This provides an informative account of their time with the childminder and valuable link with home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises her space and resources to successfully meet children's needs and consequently, children settle quickly and feel at home. The layout of the ground floor allows easy supervision; she ensures that she provides appropriate toys and equipment each day and rotates regularly for variety. Toys and activities are arranged to enable children to access them readily and independently. This means that they are confident to initiate their own play and learning. Well established routines enable the childminder to provide a good level of support and to capitalise on the time she spends playing with the children. She takes care to give equal attention to all children in her care and is flexible, making the necessary adjustments to ensure that their specific needs are met. For example, one-to-one stimulation for babies and group care for toddlers.

The childminder's policies and procedures work effectively in practice to promote the outcomes for children. Documentation is in very good order and kept securely and confidentially. The childminder ensures that all persons with access to the children are suitably vetted and has an effective procedure in place for the collection of children. Overall the needs of all children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure children are kept safe when sleeping in the garden
- increase knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures

- ensure young children are provided with healthy and appropriate snacks
- consider the use of birth to three matters to further the provision of play activities for young children.

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