



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311640
Inspection date	13 February 2006
Inspector	Kathleen Snowdon

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder lives with her husband and three children aged 18, 20 and 24-years-old, in Whickham, Gateshead. It is close to all amenities including schools, nurseries and local shops. The childminder uses her car to transport children to and from school and toddler groups. The living room is used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder registered in August 1992. She is registered to provide care for six children under 8-years. At present she is caring for eight children under 8-years-old and three children over 8-years-old at staggered intervals. The childminder

co-ordinates a local childminders' toddler group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and uses their paperwork and insurance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children eat nutritious and well-balanced meals and snacks, which are prepared for them by their parents and the childminder. They enjoy a range of food, such as cereal, biscuits and yogurt to promote their physical development and good health. The children have easy access to drinks during their time with the childminder, which helps them to feel comfortable and settled.

Older children are reminded to wash their hands regularly, especially after returning from school and before eating. Younger children have easy access to wipes, which they use with enthusiasm and growing dexterity. These arrangements promote good personal hygiene and help to minimise the spread of infection and common illnesses.

Frequent outings in the local community, for example, visits to a local shopping centre, give the children the chance to take gentle exercise. They walk to and from toddler groups, play in the local park and have access to play equipment, such as slides and see-saws. Opportunities like these increase the children's stamina and general levels of fitness. Younger children sleep in their buggies and older children rest on sofas as they watch the television to help them to unwind and relax.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Sleeping children are checked at regular intervals to ensure that they remain safe and secure while resting. Sensible use of safety equipment, for example, safety gates help to protect the children from potentially hazardous areas, such as staircases. During outings, younger children stay safe through the use of reins to keep them within the childminder's sight.

The wide range of play equipment is cleaned regularly, kept easily accessible and checked for breakages. Consequently, children play enthusiastically with items that are unlikely to hurt or cause injury to them. Smoke detectors and a fire blanket are in place to protect the children in the event of an emergency.

The childminder's strong awareness of child protection issues safeguards the children's continuing safety and wellbeing. The childminder has a current first-aid certificate, which ensures that the children receive appropriate care and attention following minor accidents and mishaps.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have easy access to a wide range of equipment which helps them to make good progress in all areas of their development. They play enthusiastically with role-play props, such as dolls and puppets, which encourage the children to use their imagination and have fun. They have ample opportunities to play with their peer group but are also happy to play on their own. This encourages the development of effective social skills and independence.

The accessibility of the equipment enables the children to make choices. They incorporate toys and real-life things, such as baby-wipes and items of furniture into their games, which helps them to become resourceful and imaginative players.

Interaction between the children and the childminder is good. The children express their feelings readily and the childminder listens to them and responds appropriately and promptly. Consequently, the children are confident, happy and well-settled.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The children learn acceptable ways to behave through appropriate guidance from the childminder. For example, they are discouraged from throwing things around which helps them to understand boundaries. The children are praised when they show good manners. This encourages them to develop respect for themselves and others. Older children are encouraged to help the younger ones, for example, helping them to put on their coats. This helps the children to develop positive personal qualities, such as helpfulness and consideration.

Frequent outings in the local community, trips to the park and the local shops, for instance, help the children to understand that they are part of a wider world. They have access to resources such as puppets, books and small world equipment, which encourage them to develop positive views of diversity.

Partnership with parents is good. Contracts are used which set out clearly the expectations of both parents and the childminder. Daily discussions ensure that parents are kept fully informed about what their child has done during their time with the childminder. Parents and childminder collaborate effectively, such as the joint effort they make to provide snacks for the children. This ensures that the needs and preferences of the children are considered fully.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Records are well organised and reviewed regularly to ensure their accuracy and relevance. The childminder shows good awareness of child protection issues. She has undertaken further training in this area to raise her awareness and understanding. She keeps a careful record of the children's attendance and displays the registration certificate to allow parents to scrutinise it. These measures help to

protect the children's safety and wellbeing.

The childminder refers occasionally to the Birth to three matters framework but has not yet used it to help her to plan activities for the youngest children. However, the children take part in appropriate activities, such as toddler group visits and regular outings. The children have easy access to a wide range of equipment which helps them to make good progress.

The childminder has regard for the children's individual needs and preferences, which helps them to feel secure and special. This is supported by the sound way in which the childminder works with parents and ensures that the children's needs are met as fully as possible.

Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the children who attend.

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):

- continue to refer to the Birth to three matters framework to improve outcomes for children under three.

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:

