



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	313473
Inspection date	17 August 2006
Inspector	Donna Suzanne Lancaster

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since January 1992. She lives with her husband and four children aged one, nine, 13 and 15 years old in Chester-le-Street. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes. Toilet and hand washing facilities are also on the ground floor of the home. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family have eight guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding 15 children, of whom, six are aged under eight years. All children attend on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local pre-school groups and transports children in a minibus to and from local schools. The childminder uses local facilities such as toddler groups, soft play and the library.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a range of outdoor activities which contribute to their good health. Daily activities include opportunities for children to be outdoors, each day they walk to and from school, often visit local parks and they enjoy use of the childminder's garden.

Children learn effectively about their own personal hygiene through the childminder setting a good example, such as, washing her own hands and gently reminding and discussing the reasons why we wash our hands at an appropriate level for the children to understand. There are satisfactory medication and accident procedures in place, however, weaknesses in the childminder's training and documentation, detailed in Organisation, affect the childminder's ability to promote children's health effectively. The implementation of a sick child policy, which is verbally communicated to parents, promotes the environment as a healthy one.

Children's dietary needs are well met through the childminder having a good understanding of the dietary needs of children and providing healthy meals and satisfactory snacks. Children's preferences and parents' wishes are actively sought and reflected in the menu provided. Meal times are promoted as a positive experience for all the children, they sit together and enjoy positive social interaction. Children are given free access to fresh drinking water at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, caring and organised environment where most risks are identified and minimised. This allows children to move around freely, independently and safely. The childminder helps children understand how to keep themselves safe when out and about, for example as she promotes road safety when walking to and from school and stranger danger. Children's safety is further promoted by the childminder encouraging children to be aware of their own safety, such as not wearing high heeled dressing up shoes outside or being careful when climbing the steps onto the trampoline with dressing up clothes on. Children are protected from the risk of fire through the childminder practising a regular evacuation of the premises with the children. Suitable fire safety equipment is available including smoke detectors and a fire blanket. However, parents have not given written permission for their child to be transported in a vehicle or to be taken on outings, these pose a risk to children's safety.

Children safely select activities from a range of good quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards. Equipment is stored well at child level which allows even the youngest to make choices for themselves and direct their own play. The childminder monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children are suitably protected through the childminder having a satisfactory understanding of the child protection procedure. Relevant contact numbers are available and up to date documentation has been read and understood by the childminder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children relate well to each other and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They play confidently, with a range of activities that contribute to their overall development. Children freely choose between a selection of toys, games and activities, increasing both their independence and their interest. Children have developed very good relationships with the childminder and are confident and relaxed in her company. They receive constant warm, physical and verbal support and encouragement. This contributes to the children's sense of belonging. Children's self-esteem is developing as a result of the childminder encouraging and praising them and valuing what they have to offer. Children's individual needs are well met through the childminder's sound knowledge of their capabilities.

The childminder provides a range of interesting and sufficiently challenging activities for children in her care. Activities available include, regular outdoor play, craft activities, imaginary play, construction and board games. These reflect the age and stage of development of the children cared for and specific areas of interest that a child may have. Children are able to rest or be active according to their needs.

The childminder skilfully incorporates open questions to encourage the children to think about their play and safety, for example, what they are doing, how they do it and to include all the children in the activities provided.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder satisfactorily promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice which results in children feeling welcome. They access an appropriate range of activities and resources which increases their awareness of diversity.

All children are welcomed into the home and participate in all activities because the childminder values and respects their individuality. The childminder follows the children's daily routines, after discussing them with parents, thus ensuring that the children's needs are met. Children's behaviour is very good, as a result of the childminder's consistent and positive behaviour management strategies. Children feel relaxed and secure in the positive atmosphere that the childminder creates.

There is appropriate partnership with parents in place and their views are sought about their children's individual needs. However, written agreements setting out the expectations of both parties, activities and business arrangements are not in place. Parents are verbally informed of their child's day and activities. This enables the childminder to satisfactorily meet children's individual needs.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Space, resources and routine are well organised to ensure children have easy access to the facilities and equipment they need. They can move around confidently, independently and safely indoors and outdoors and take part in a range of interesting activities including, organised activities, free play, mealtimes, quiet times and outdoor activities.

Parents are kept verbally informed about their children's care and are encouraged to transfer relevant information to support the childminder in providing suitable care and meeting their child's needs. However, there are very limited systems in place to support the efficient, safe management of the provision and to promote the welfare of children. For example, prior written permissions are not obtained from parents to administer medication; to seek emergency medical treatment or advice; to take children on outings; to transport children in a vehicle and written agreements with parents are not in place. Regulations have not been met as the daily register does not show the hours of children's attendance and the childminder does not have a current first aid certificate in place, this prevents the childminder from being able to fully protect children's health and safety. Also the childminder's registration certificate is not displayed for parents to see, this prevents the parents from being fully informed regarding the childminder's registration requirements. As a result, overall, the provision is inadequate and does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for their child. The childminder has not made any progress with obtaining this permission, therefore, this still poses a risk to children's health and safety.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- submit an action plan detailing how you will meet the qualification criteria in relation to first aid
- ensure written agreements, setting out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child, activities provided and business arrangements are completed with parents
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint, including the relevant contact details and in line with recent changes to regulation
- ensure the times of children's arrival and departure is maintained in the attendance register
- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, to take children on outings, to transport children in a vehicle and prior permission to administer medications
- ensure registration certificate is displayed for parents at all times.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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