



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321690
Inspection date	29 March 2006
Inspector	Elaine Marie McDonnell

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 1990. She lives with her husband and adult son in the Fens area of Hartlepool. The local primary school and shops are within easy walking distance of the home.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes and there is an enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. The family have no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for up to 6 children under 8 years at any one time and currently has 4 children on roll aged from 4 to 7 years, all are cared for on a

part time basis.

She is an active member of the Hartlepool Childminding Network Group and is also a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted as they are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. The childminder demonstrates good hygiene practices when preparing meals and children understand the importance of simple personal hygiene routines such as hand washing. Individual hand towels are available for each child to help prevent the spread of infection. Children's health and safety are well protected as an appropriate first aid box plus accident and medication records are available.

Children are very well nourished. They receive varied and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks. The childminder works well in partnership with parents to ensure that children's individual dietary requirements are fully met. Parents are kept well informed of what their child has eaten throughout the day.

Children have good opportunities to be involved in physical activity both indoors and outdoors. They walk to and from school every day, visit an indoor soft play area at least once a week and play in the garden in warmer weather. Some large physical play equipment is available in the garden. Although no children currently being minded require a sleep throughout the day, the childminder ensures that the daily routine allows for some time when the children can rest and be involved in quiet activities, such as story time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where toys and play materials are readily available for them and are attractively presented. The childminder has taken good steps to ensure a safe environment for children, for example, the garden and premises are kept secure and risk assessments have been completed.

All toys and play materials observed are stimulating and are in good condition. The childminder ensures they remain safe and suitable for children's use with regular checking and cleaning routines. Children are kept safe on outings with constant supervision and are taught road safety when walking to and from school. Children also learn to keep themselves safe when involved in regular fire drills with the childminder.

Children's welfare is well protected as the childminder has a good understanding of the main areas of child abuse and of possible signs. She is aware of who to contact

for advice and support, or to pass on any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are involved in an excellent range of stimulating activities and outings that promote development in all areas of learning. For example, they enjoy large physical play, visits to local social groups, are involved in craft activities and trips out to the museum, parks and farms. They attend story time and craft afternoons at the library. Activities are changed regularly to ensure that minded children remain busy, occupied and learning.

Children's confidence and self-esteem are very well promoted as they are constantly praised and encouraged for their efforts. They are also given opportunities to exercise choice and promote their independence, for example, when deciding what they want to eat and when visiting the bathroom independently. Minded children are very interested in the toys and play materials available and concentrate well for extended periods of time.

Children are acquiring new skills and knowledge when involved in fun activities with the childminder. For example, their matching and sorting skills are very well promoted during a card game. They also have an excellent understanding of shapes, including some of the less common shapes, such as hexagon and 3D shapes such as cube and cone. The childminder sometimes says the wrong shape during the game and the children find this extremely amusing and are skilled at correcting her. Children have good opportunities to begin to learn about wider society when using the range of resources that are available, such as dolls and books which reflect positive images of other cultures and when involved in activities relating to Chinese New Year. They learn about their own cultural traditions when making Mothers Day cards.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Equal opportunities is very well promoted within the setting as children are treated as individuals and their needs are met. There are currently no children with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language attending the setting. However, the childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with special needs and has attended a training course in relation to meeting children's special educational needs. She has a good understanding of each child's individual personalities and stage of development.

Children are well behaved and the childminder has a good understanding of how to manage behaviour appropriately. An individual behaviour management procedure, which helps children to begin to understand about acceptable codes of behaviour, is available for each child and is agreed with parents. Children are very happy and settled in the childminders care and thoroughly enjoy their time with her.

The childminder works well in partnership with parents. They receive useful written information about the provision including policy and procedure documents. However, there is currently no written consent available from parents for the childminder to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Parents are kept fully informed of their child's day, development and progress through regular discussion. Many thank you cards and letters are available from parents and all contain very positive comments about the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that all adults in the household are suitable to work with children, all have undertaken vetting procedures by the local authority. The childminder has an exceptional attitude towards personal training and development and has attended many additional training courses and work shops since her last inspection, including introduction courses relating to the 'Birth to 3 matters framework'. She has also completed an approved first aid course.

Adult-child ratios are maintained and children receive excellent adult support and attention. The childminder is very aware of children's individual personalities, abilities and preferences and the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All required documentation, for the safe and efficient management of the provision is available. There are also many, good practice records available such as policies and procedures. Documents are very well organised and up date. The excellent organisation of the provision effectively promotes children's care, learning and play.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to continue to access training to develop the already good practice. She has continually improved her knowledge and understanding of child care issues and continued to develop good practice by attending many additional training courses and work shops.

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):

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment

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