

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	502538
Inspection date	19 February 2008
Inspector	Andrea, Marie Paulson

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 2001. She lives with her husband in a semi-detached house, approximately one mile from Kendal town centre. They have four children aged 16, 15, nine and eight years. There are five children on roll. Minded children have access to the living room, dining room, hall and kitchen. The bathroom is on the first floor and there is an enclosed rear yard used for outside play. The garage and the front area of the house are excluded, except for access. There are shops, schools and parks within walking distance. The childminder takes minded children on outings to local leisure attractions and toddler groups, where she meets with other childminders and their children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local childminding group. She has a Teaching Assistant level 3 qualification and is currently studying for the early years foundation degree.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Each child receives appropriate care as the childminder works closely with parents to share individual health details. The childminder has good awareness of nutrition and allergies so that

children's individual health needs are further met. Children develop their understanding of good hygiene practices, for instance, as they use individual towels to help prevent infections. However, the practice of washing hands before eating is not consistent. The premises are kept clean and very tidy.

Children develop good movement skills through interesting activities both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy local walks and visits to the park and adventure playground where they practise running, climbing and balancing. Children move freely around the rooms indoors to access resources available. They develop fine movements as they learn to handle books, do jigsaws and make collages. Children rest when they need to as they relax on the comfortable sofa, play quietly or have a sleep.

The childminder provides nutritious snacks, such as fruit, and drinks are available at all times. She takes care to ask children if they are thirsty. Their meals are provided mainly by parents. Children are encouraged to feed themselves and are well nourished according to their individual appetites.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel safe and secure in an environment where hazards are continuously identified and resolved. A minor exception is the fireguard which is not secured. Children move around the rooms freely and without harm as several features are in place to keep them safe. The premises are secure so children are well protected. The good quality equipment is well maintained so that children use it confidently.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they sit properly, give enough space to play without bumping and are careful not to step on the toys. An emergency evacuation plan has been devised and practised regularly so that children become familiar with the procedure. Children are effectively supervised throughout the rooms by the childminder, so they are happy and confident.

The childminder has a good knowledge of child protection procedures and contacts, having completed training, so that children are further safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a good rapport with the childminder and respond well to her calm and friendly manner. They are confident and relaxed.

Children's communication skills and vocabulary are promoted through much conversation. They learn how to use words such as 'elephant' and 'giraffe'. Their self-expression is developed well through role play as they sing into the play microphone. The childminder is skilful in creating learning opportunities through spontaneous play. They recognise colours as they point out a 'blue' cat, sort toys while tidying up, link 'choo choo' sounds to the train and learn about circle and star shapes while drawing with stencils. The childminder extends learning as they 'try to find the tiger'.

Children explore how things work as they try to thread a spoon through a sponge. They have several opportunities for sensory development on outings and through play as they feel the

sponges in the treasure basket, taste the fruit, listen to the sounds of the musical instruments and feel the textures of craft materials.

Children pick out a toy to play with from a bag of photographs provided. In this way, they are encouraged to make a choice and develop some independence. However, there are insufficient resources made available to create a particularly stimulating environment. The planned activities are closely linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to promote overall development. The childminder makes observation of children's play and achievements in order to plan for their general progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of the wider world as they play with resources, including books and dolls, which reflect other cultures. They do art and craft activities based on festivals. Children enjoy their own community as they visit local shops and amenities. The childminder works closely with parents to meet individual needs.

Children are well behaved and follow consistent ground rules. The childminder is a good role model for speaking respectfully to each other and encouraging good manners. Their good behaviour is reinforced with much praise and encouragement. Children feel valued, with the childminder taking great interest in their ideas and much conversation takes place. They respond well to the childminder's calm and friendly manner so that they develop confidence and self-esteem. Children learn to be responsible as they take care of toys.

The childminder works closely with parents so that children benefit from continuity of care. A file includes comprehensive information about the care provision for parents, including thorough policies and procedures. The partnership with parents is further strengthened through the use of individual diaries which record daily routines and activities. Feedback from parents is positive and includes comments on how children enjoy their time at the childminder's and have 'love, care and fun'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a teaching assistant qualification and is also involved in a local Brownie group so that she has significant experience with young children. The rooms are effectively supervised so that children play in a safe environment and enjoy their time with the childminder.

Their quality of care is further supported by the childminder working with the parents to continuously meet the children's individual needs. The required records are very well organised into individual files and kept confidential and secure. The exception is that the registration certificate is not clearly displayed. She has developed a comprehensive file of information linked to the National Standards and is very knowledgeable about childminding issues.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the childminder was recommended to record minor accidents, incidents, immunisations, parental consent to give medication and seek emergency treatment. Documents show that this has been achieved so that children's health is further protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- establish consistent good hygiene practice of washing hands before eating
- secure the safety fireguard
- provide sufficient accessible resources to create a more stimulating environment
- display the registration certificate more clearly.

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