



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506916
Inspection date	02 November 2006
Inspector	Andrea, Jane Lockyer
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 has been registered since 1983. She lives with her husband and two adult daughters in a terraced house, in the Cramlington area of Northumberland.

Local amenities and public transport systems are within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor area is used for childminding purposes. Children are also able to access two bedrooms and the bathroom on the first floor. There is no suitable outdoor play area; however, children are taken out daily to use the local amenities. The family do not have any pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years and is currently caring for four children, three of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and receives support and training opportunities from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are outdoor or indoor activities which help them develop control of their bodies for example, as they play in the park on swings, slides and climbing frames, go on local walks and join in with music and movement sessions in the house. Regular visits to the local toddler group to use sit and ride toys and visits to soft play also help to improve children's physical skills and enjoy being active.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming home, where they are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. The childminder maintains a good standard of hygiene throughout the home and follows good hygiene practices throughout the daily routine. The consistent adult support and guidance helps children gain an understanding of hygiene and a desire to become independent in their personal care, for example, as they help to wash toys, wash their hands and help themselves to tissues. Written and verbal communication with parents and appropriate records ensure that children's individual health needs are met.

Children are beginning to have a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet. They are able to make choices from a variety of healthy foods, for example, a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables and help themselves to easily accessible drinks throughout the day. Children's individual dietary needs are well met through good partnerships with parents to discuss any allergies or special dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in a safe home where the risks are identified and minimised. This enables them to move around safely, freely and independently. The childminder helps children to gain an awareness of safety, both indoors and outdoors, by talking and explaining how to cross roads safely, encouraging them to help to tidy away toys so as not to fall over them and promoting the safe use of outdoor play equipment when in the park. Children also enjoyed attending a 'Safety Day' in the local park, where they were able to see demonstrations from the fire brigade and explore the fire engine. She achieves an appropriate balance between freedom and setting safe limits. This allows children to learn a sense of danger and develop knowledge about how to protect themselves.

Children independently select activities from a good range of quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has attended child protection training to keep up-to-date with current legislation and ensures that all parents are made aware of responsibility for reporting any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the childminder's home. They are making steady progress because the childminder is aware of their individual needs and provides a range of experiences that contribute to their all round development.

They enjoy activities, such as baking biscuits, drawing and painting pictures, playing and dancing to music, looking at books and being involved in role play games. They are growing in confidence and becoming more independent because the childminder provides all children with good levels of support and encouragement.

They relate well to each other and have built up close and caring relationships with the childminder, which increase their sense of trust and help them to develop a sense of self.

Daily outings to local amenities, such as, toddler groups help children to socialise and develop good relationships with their peers and other adults.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to develop a positive attitude towards others and gaining an understanding about the wider world. The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, resulting in all children feeling valued and free from discrimination. Children are able to access an appropriate range of resources through their everyday play, that increase their awareness of diversity, such as dolls, books, puzzles and small world figures. They have also enjoyed watching the local Chinese New Year celebrations. They have good opportunities to learn about their local community as they visit local amenities and places of interest, such as the local coast and lighthouse and go fishing in rock-pools, the theatre, Sea Life centre, local parks, shops and toddler groups.

The childminder has realistic expectations of children's behaviour. She has a sensitive approach and implements a range of good strategies to promote positive behaviour that help children understand right from wrong. Children respond positively to the childminder's praise and encouragement, for example, they help to tidy up, share toys and take turns. They show care and concern for one another and generally behave very well.

Children benefit from the good relationships between the childminder and parents. Good communication ensures parents are kept informed of most aspects of the childminding practice and the care, welfare and progress of their children. However, parents are not made fully aware of the complaints procedure and the childminder has not obtained parental written consent to, seek emergency medical treatment or transport children in her car.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The well organised environment and good daily routines ensure that children are happy and well settled. Good opportunities are made for free play, social interaction, resting, eating and going out. This means that children are gaining in confidence to initiate and extend their own play and learning. The required ratios are maintained and time is organised well, which results in children receiving appropriate support and their needs being met.

The childminders good knowledge, skills and positive attitude towards extended training enhances the care of children.

Most of the required policies, procedures, records and documentation are in place and shared with parents.

Overall, the provision meets 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; ensure parents are notified that children who are ill or infectious cannot be cared for, obtain parents written consent to seek emergency medical treatment and transport children in the car. Following a subsequent visit to vary the childminder's conditions of registration the childminder was asked to also; make sure any hazardous items are inaccessible to children, make sure children are unable to open the window in the first floor double bedroom and make sure that electric sockets in areas accessible to children are fitted with socket covers.

Children's safety has been improved because the childminder has made, all electrical sockets, hazardous materials and the window either safe or inaccessible to children.

Children's health has been improved because the childminder discusses the care of sick children with parents and has an appropriate policy written into the parental contracts.

Written parental consent has not been obtained for, transporting children in the car or to seek emergency medical treatment.

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 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):

- obtain written parental consent to transport children in the car and to seek emergency medical treatment
- ensure that parents are made fully aware of the complaints procedure and maintain a log book in the event of a complaint being made.

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