

Inspection report for early years provision

---

|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 506942                   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 23 January 2008          |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Noreen Elizabeth Appleby |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Childcare                |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 two grown up children in a house in Prudhoe. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Toilet and hand washing facilities are on the first floor. Minded children may also use the spare bedroom. There is an enclosed back garden, on three levels. The lowest level is available for outdoor play. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the local area, as well as parks, shops and local amenities.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is presently caring for five children aged from 10 months to under eight years, as well as two children aged over eight years. All children are cared for on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children to, and collects them from, nursery or school. She maintains links with other local childminders and takes young children to the East Tynedale Childminding Association toddler group.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Effective health and hygiene practices contribute well towards maintaining children's health. For example, the childminder sets high standards for home hygiene and she encourages children to wash their hands after using the bathroom, or before they eat. Suitable nappy-changing arrangements are in place, although present routines do not effectively minimise the risk of cross-infection. Sound systems are in place regarding the administration of medication. The childminder has completed relevant first aid training, which enables her to manage children's minor injuries competently. A suitable range of first aid items is available, although stocks in the first aid kit have not been replenished after use. Comprehensive procedures, such as the arrangements for sick children and exclusion periods for contagious diseases, support children's health well and ensure that their individual needs are effectively met.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which promotes their physical health well. They enjoy going for walks, running and playing in the park and visiting the soft play centre. Young children go to toddler group, where they have good opportunities to use large equipment, such as the slide or climbing frame. They also use sit-and-ride and push-along toys. Therefore, activities and resources help children to develop large physical skills and coordination. Young children are also able to rest or sleep in line with their individual needs.

Children's dietary requirements are fully discussed and agreed with parents. All children presently bring their own foodstuffs, which are appropriately refrigerated and reheated. The childminder promotes healthy eating by encouraging children to eat fruit, rather than biscuits, for snack. They are offered regular drinks of water or juice, which keeps them adequately hydrated throughout the day. The childminder has also attended a workshop on dental care and she has talked to the children about the negative effects of eating too many sugary foods.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are comfortable and settled as a result of the childminder providing a warm, welcoming, child-friendly environment. They enjoy a wide selection of good quality toys and equipment. Resources are regularly checked and maintained in a clean and safe condition. Space is organised well to allow children room to play freely and to access resources independently. Children are also able to rest comfortably, without being disturbed. The childminder checks them regularly to ensure their safety. Premises are secure and the childminder is vigilant in taking steps to minimise hazards. Suitable safety equipment, such as socket covers and stair gates, are well used to enhance children's safety. The childminder has identified a fire evacuation drill, which she practises occasionally with the children. This help them to understand what to do in an emergency. Children are also learning to use good road safety drills when they go for walks with the childminder. Outings and transportation agreements are maintained with parents and carers and appropriate car documents are readily available for inspection. These also contribute towards keeping children safe.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded because the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues. Through discussion, she is able to identify signs and symptoms which would raise a concern and she understands her responsibility of working within the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The childminder is attentive to children's care requirements and she ensures they have good levels of support. Daily routines are flexible and take good account of children's individual needs, such as rests, meals and school or nursery runs. Therefore, children are happy and settled. They have formed a warm and affectionate relationship with the childminder. This gives them a feeling of security and belonging. The childminder ensures the children are closely supervised and effectively supported, which contributes towards enhancing their emotional development.

Children enjoy a broad range of play and learning opportunities which support their individual interests and developmental stages well. Babies and toddlers enjoy push-along resources and musical toys, which they explore enthusiastically. They have good opportunities to experience different textures, for example, as they look at 'feely books' with the childminder or play with dough, water or sand. They are learning to communicate and becoming more vocal as the childminder talks to them, asks questions and reinforces key words to promote their speech. They are developing social skills as they mix with adults and peers in the family home or at toddler group. They particularly enjoy songs and rhymes. They watch with interest, dance and perform actions as they watch a musical movement programme on television.

Older children are developing good hand-eye coordination as they learn to assemble a train track or as they make jigsaw puzzles. They enjoy board games, which help them to recognise number, colour and shape. They have good creative opportunities for art and crafts, such as drawing, painting and collage. They are developing an appreciation for books as they read independently or listen to stories. Some enjoy dressing up and playing with small world resources. This helps to develop their imagination and creativity.

The childminder demonstrates a sound knowledge of children's developmental stages. She has accessed training to familiarise herself with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the 'Early years foundation stage' curriculum. She is beginning to consider how she can implement these into her planned activities to help children learn more effectively. In addition, she supports the children well throughout their play. She takes time to listen to them and asks or responds to their questions to enhance and consolidate their learning.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are effectively valued and respected by the childminder. Their individual needs, including any special requirements, are thoroughly discussed with parents and carers. The childminder familiarises herself with issues, such as the children's home routines, interests, likes and dislikes, to ensure good continuity of care. Therefore children are happy and settled. They are developing a good sense of community, for example, as they travel to and from school or nursery and through regular outings to the park, toddler group, the library or the soft play centre. They enjoy 'free choice' of equipment and resources, which positively promotes gender issues. Occasional activities, such as talking to children about a Chinese calendar, give children a basic understanding of multicultural issues. However, learning opportunities do not effectively help children to learn about disability, cultural diversity and the wider world.

Children have good opportunities to contribute towards making choices and decisions. They choose what they would like to play with and they plan future activities and outings with the childminder. This gives them a sense of belonging and makes them feel valued. They are

encouraged to help with household activities, such as tidying toys away when they have finished playing with them, or helping at meal and snack times. This gives them a sense of routine and helps them to know what is expected of them. The childminder sets realistic boundaries for children's behaviour, which are sensitively reinforced, when required. Children are learning to manage their behaviour well and they are generally kind and helpful towards one another. The childminder reinforces this by providing encouragement and praise, which boosts the children's feeling of self-worth.

Children's continuity of care is well met as a result of good arrangements regarding partnership with parents and carers. Introductory visits are effectively used to share information and to help children to settle in comfortably. Information about the childcare service is thoroughly shared, for example, through written contracts and agreements, policy and procedure statements and displays. The childminder also makes good use of informal verbal feedback when children arrive and leave. This keeps parents and carers well informed regarding their child's care, learning and progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from an enthusiastic carer who demonstrates a strong commitment to her role. Since the last inspection, the childminder has completed a Level 2 certificate for Teaching Assistants. She has attended numerous training courses, including 'Childminding is a proper job,' the 'Early years foundation stage' curriculum and 'Childminder professional development toolkit' workshops. She has devised a formal training plan, which identifies that she has enrolled for further courses relating to fire safety and child protection. In addition, she is currently working towards a recognised quality assurance award. She uses her knowledge and skills to improve children's care, learning and play experiences.

Children are happy and settled as a result of regular, but flexible, routines that take good account their individual needs. They are well cared for in the required ratios, thereby maintaining their safety, regulations and care. They enjoy a well organised environment, which enables space and resources to be well used. The childminder allows children to initiate and extend their own play and learning and to develop at their own pace, yet ensures they are closely supervised and well supported.

Recording systems are well used to successfully underpin children's care. The registration certificate is clearly displayed to inform parents and carers of the childminder's conditions of registration. Suitable checks have been completed for adult members of the household, which contributes towards keeping children safe. Comprehensive documentation systems are well used to record relevant information and to share information thoroughly with parents and carers. Records are up-to-date and maintained in line with National Standards. Sound arrangements are in place to ensure concerns are appropriately documented. Formal policy statements have been drafted to clearly identify practices used and to ensure information is consistently shared with parents and carers. Children's personal records, and other associated documents, are securely stored to maintain confidentiality.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of recommendation raised at the last inspection, the childminder has improved children's health and safety by ensuring that all accident entries are countersigned by the parent or carer and by obtaining consents for the seeking of emergency medical treatment or advice.

### **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):

- improve nappy-changing arrangements to prevent the risk of cross-infection
- ensure the first aid kit is suitably stocked
- improve opportunities for children to learn about disability, cultural diversity and the wider world.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)