

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507037
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 1997. She lives with her husband and 12 year old daughter in a semi-detached house in Choppington. The lounge, dining room, playroom, kitchen and ground floor toilet are used for childminding. There is a rear garden available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for six children under the age of eight years and currently has five children under the age of eight and two children over the age of eight years on roll. The family has a pet dog.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Appropriate health and hygiene procedures are in place to help support children's good health. For example, the childminder follows appropriate nappy changing procedures. However, inconsistent hand washing before snack and after stroking the dog does not promote children's good health. Clear procedures are in place to record medication, accidents and emergency consents; this promotes children's well-being.

The childminder understands the importance of providing a healthy and balanced diet. Children have constant access to drinks and the childminder consults with parents to ensure that she is aware of any dietary needs. Children enjoy a variety of activities which contribute to their physical development. They go for walks to the park and play on climbing frames and swings in the rear garden. Appropriate procedures are in place for children to sleep; this ensures that children are able to rest or be active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where good procedures are in place to minimise risks. For example, good use is made of stair gates, sockets are covered, and the childminder maintains close observation of the children at all times. However, the area into the carport is accessible to children from the garden; this does not promote children's safety. Children are able to move freely as space is clean and well maintained. This reduces the risk of accidents. A well maintained range of toys and resources are available to children in a spacious playroom. They are stored in child height boxes so that children are able to self-select from them; this encourages independence and contributes to a sense of belonging. The childminder ensures that toys are clean, safe and suitable for the age of the children.

Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder has good procedures in place. For example, young children are securely strapped into pushchairs, while older children develop independence as they are allowed to walk a safe distance ahead. The childminder carries emergency contact numbers with her and has written consent in place from parents. Children are effectively safeguarded as the childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. She is clear about procedures to follow should she have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good balance of activities, both inside and outside of the home. For example, they play confidently around the home with pushchairs, dolls and electronic computers. Children enjoy a variety of activities which contribute to their imaginative play, for example, they dress up as builders, play with soft dough and paint pictures. They have good opportunities to socialise with their peers as they attend regular toddler groups and go on trips to the beach.

The childminder interacts well with the children. She talks to them about the activities that they are doing and they confidently approach her to sit on her knee and read stories. Regular praise and encouragement helps children to begin to develop self-esteem and confidence and the childminder makes good use of questioning to encourage children's development. For example, she asks them to name the colours and encourages them to make choices about their activities. As a result, children are happy and settled with the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder demonstrates a good awareness of equal opportunities. She interacts well with the children and ensures that they are all able to join in with activities. For example, she ensures that all children have a doll and pushchair to play with. Children learn about their local community as they go for walks and visit local toddler groups. They take part in activities which

promote their learning about their own culture, for example, taking part in Easter egg hunts and making Christmas cards. However, there are no planned activities to promote children's learning about diversity and the different cultures. The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and would ensure that she worked closely with parents to meet children's individual needs.

Children develop self-confidence as they receive praise and encouragement from the childminder. She has a written behaviour management policy in place and encourages the children to learn right from wrong by explanation and good role modelling. Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and parents. She keeps a file of her policies and procedures which parents see on their initial visit and she gathers relevant information from parents in order to meet children's individual needs. Verbal feedback ensures that parents are kept informed about their child's day, this promotes continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an appropriately organised home where they are safe and secure. Toys and space are effectively organised, enabling children to move around freely and independently to make choices about their play. Flexible daily routines allow children to experience a range of activities in the home and community, which helps to support their social skills.

The childminder has attended some training to further develop her practice and has all required documentation in place. However, some of the policies and procedures are not specific to the childminder's setting. The childminder's registration certificate is clearly displayed and an up-to-date register of attendance is maintained.

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 a recommendation to obtain written permission to administer medication was raised. This is now in place for all medication.

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 complaint 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):

- implement consistent hand washing routines
- make the carport area safe and inaccessible to children
- develop activities to promote children's learning about different cultures and diversity
- update policies and procedures to ensure that they are specific to the setting.

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