



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY229806
Inspection date	31 March 2006
Inspector	Mandy Black

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 August 2002. She lives with her husband and two children aged 2 and 4-years-old. The family home is semi-detached with an enclosed rear garden, at Gatenby, between Northallerton and Bedale. Children have access to most rooms. The childminder is registered to care for four children, and is currently caring for two children under 5 years, on a part-time basis. She collects children from local schools and takes younger children to local toddler groups. Family pets include a dog and a cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder follows good health and hygiene procedures in order to protect children from infection. For example, her sickness policy is well implemented and she does not care for children who have contagious illnesses, in order to protect the health of all children in her care. High priority is given to hand washing; the childminder washes her own hands very regularly, after nappy changing and prior to food preparation, and wipes young children's hands and noses frequently.

Although accident records are in good order, the childminder does not always obtain written parental consent and keep records of medication administered. This is a breach in regulations and places children's health at risk. Children are well nourished and really enjoy healthy snacks, such as chopped banana and breadsticks. Drinks of mainly water or milk are offered frequently throughout the day, which ensures children do not become thirsty.

Even though children do benefit from fresh air on their walks to and from nursery each day, the rear garden is currently not accessible and they only visit the local park a couple of times per week. This limits their opportunity to develop a range of physical skills, although they do practice climbing and balancing when playing on the small climbing frame at toddler group.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment with all necessary safety features in place to protect children. The rear garden is currently unsuitable because it is used mainly by the childminder's dog, and is not adequately maintained. As a result, children have limited access to regular outdoor play. A broad range of toys and equipment are provided, which are all very clean and in excellent condition. They are entirely suitable and arranged well so that children can make independent choices from baskets at their own level.

When outdoors, children are kept safe because they are either securely strapped into a buggy, or they hold the childminder's hand carefully. She helps children develop a suitable awareness of road safety, as she talks to them about the importance of stopping to look for cars. They listen attentively as she warns them of the danger of a hot oven, as they check to see if their cakes are cooked. Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a satisfactory understanding of her role in child protection. She feels able to put appropriate procedures into practice, if necessary. The childminder also keeps records of children's existing injuries, to protect herself.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are content and happy due to the cheerful interaction from the childminder; she offers plenty of praise, which makes them feel good about themselves. They respond with smiles as she congratulates them on successfully completing a jigsaw. Positive relationships are further demonstrated as children approach the childminder comfortably and easily, climbing onto her lap for a cuddle.

The childminder talks to the children, introducing new words to effectively support their language development. She asks them to point to their noses, which they do correctly, with big smiles, and attempt to repeat the word 'nose'. Their language and social skills are further improved as they sing together and participate in action rhymes, such as 'Ring a ring o' roses', with much enthusiasm. Children are very interested in the range of suitable toys that they are able to choose freely for themselves. For example, they delve into the toy baskets and smile excitedly as they find items that interest them, such as Postman Pat.

Children are very keen as they bake cakes with the childminder. The children attempt to carefully spoon sugar and flour into the scales. Older children count the spoonfuls correctly, and they all try mixing with a large spoon, and observe the electric whisk with curiosity. The childminder successfully encourages children to develop their concentration skills with suitable activities, such as looking at books together and completing lift out jigsaws with large easy to handle pieces. She is not familiar with the Birth to three framework, which will help to enhance her already good practice with children in this age group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder establishes successful working relationships with parents in order to meet children's individual needs. She uses a daily diary to keep records relating to children's care and development, and effective discussion ensures that she is fully informed about children's likes, dislikes and any special needs. The childminder has introduced a complaints log, in line with changes to registration requirements. She has a sound understanding of equality of opportunity and works to her written policy. The childminder has some appropriate resources, such as play people and dolls that reflect diversity, but books and jigsaws are limited.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and distinguish between right and wrong. The childminder consistently implements totally suitable strategies for managing behaviour when children squabble over toys. Excellent use of distraction is observed frequently as she produces new and different toys to diffuse conflict. This shows that she implements her written behaviour policy very effectively and as a result, children are learning to play in harmony and consider the feelings of others.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is well qualified and experienced in childcare, and demonstrates a high regard for children's well-being. She organises her time effectively, so that all children receive a good level of her time and attention, as well as an appropriate balance of child-centred and adult-directed activities. She has arranged her rooms so that they are welcoming to young children and promote opportunities for them to make choices in their play.

The majority of childminding documentation is in very good order, fully meets requirements and is stored with a high regard for confidentiality. The childminder has recently implemented a full range of user friendly policies, such as managing behaviour and equal opportunities; all of which work well in practice to promote outcomes for children. These are shared with parents and accurately reflect her working practice.

Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to develop resources that reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability, in order to raise children's awareness and support their sense of identity. This has been partly met and the development of suitable resources is ongoing.

Children's health and safety has been improved, as a result of the childminder obtaining written parental consent to seek medical help in the event of an emergency.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?
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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):

- ensure that prior written consent is obtained from parents to administer medication to children, and that records are kept of all medication administered, which are signed and acknowledged by parents
- provide opportunities for children to take part in regular outdoor physical activity
- ensure that the rear garden is well maintained, safe and suitable for children's use.

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