

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY242133
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Inspector	Judith Ann Hodgson
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 November 2002. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, 10 and six years. They live in an end link terraced house, situated on the outskirts of Prudhoe, Northumberland which is a short walking distance from the local school and shops. The whole of the ground floor and the first floor bathroom are used for childminding. The childminder is registered to care for four children and currently has three children on roll. All children attend part time.

It is a non-smoking household. The family has a pet dog and a chipmunk which are kept outside.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children to and collects them from school. The childminder takes the children to the local park regularly.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a range of appropriate toys and playthings for the children. They are supported in establishing suitable personal hygiene routines through being encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after going to the bathroom. This has a positive impact on their well-being. Parents are contacted and children collected should they become ill, which ensures that they are well cared for and remaining children are not at risk of cross-infection. The childminder has effective hygiene routines in place to ensure that the family pet dog does not pose a health risk to children. For example, the dog is kept outside in the enclosed rear garden. The children do not have access to the garden.

Accident and medication books are in place. These are signed by parents and kept up to date, which benefits the children's health through continuity of care. The childminder has a suitable first aid kit that is stored in the kitchen out of children's reach. However, written permission for emergency medical care has not yet been obtained and this compromises the children's health. The childminder discusses dietary needs and preferences with parents and provides some healthy meals and snacks which include hot meat meals with fresh vegetables. The children also eat some processed foods and are able to choose a snack of fruit at any time. Suitable drinks are offered on a regular basis to the children. Parents are made aware of their children's diet through daily discussion with the childminder.

Although the children do not have access to the garden for physical play, the children have adequate opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they walk to and from school daily and visit a local park regularly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure, welcoming environment. The rooms have good natural light from windows at each end of the room and adequate space for play. The front and rear doors are kept locked allowing the children free movement through the ground floor of the house. The children play in the living room and the dining area where there is adequate floor and table space to use a range of toys appropriate for their development. Older children independently select activities from a sufficient range of toys and equipment. The childminder supports younger children in their choice of toys, selecting toys that she knows they will enjoy.

The childminder has a range of safety measures in place to reduce the risk of accidents and to help keep children safe. For example, cleaning materials and knives are inaccessible to children, covers are placed over exposed electric sockets and a stair gate is available to prevent children having unsupervised access to the stairs or kitchen as necessary. Washing and toilet facilities are available both on the ground floor and in the first floor family bathroom. However, there is no door on the ground floor toilet which means that children's privacy and dignity is not maintained when they use this facility. The childminder states that she has devised a fire evacuation plan and practises this with the children. This has a positive impact on their safety. All fire safety equipment is in place, for example, smoke alarms are fitted both upstairs and downstairs and a fire blanket is available in the kitchen.

Recent training undertaken in child protection means that the childminder has a sufficient understanding of the signs, symptoms and procedure to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing with a range of toys and have opportunities to be creative, such as drawing. They chat with the childminder as they ask for familiar activities, such as their individual drawing books. The childminder discusses colours and encourages the children to write their names, which has positive impact on their progress. The older children show a sense of confidence as they choose from the playthings provided. The childminder has undertaken training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework but has not yet implemented the resources and activities. The childminder praises and encourages the children in their play which develops their self-esteem. For example, when the children are drawing she makes suggestions and praises their efforts. Children's imaginative development is supported as the childminder plays with the children. They pretend to be at the hairdresser's or set up and play shops. Younger children use their imagination as they play with handbags and purses. Children are settled and make themselves at home in the childminder's house, they are affectionate towards the childminder and seek cuddles spontaneously.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder welcomes all children into her home. She takes care to know the children well and understands their likes and dislikes. For example, she is able to provide their favourite activities and playthings which means that the children enjoy their time there. She has limited knowledge of equal opportunities and has not had any experience of caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities and has not undertaken any training. Although she has limited understanding of this area of childcare, she demonstrates a very positive attitude and states that she is willing to undertake training to provide an inclusive environment. There are very limited resources reflecting positive images of diversity which has a negative impact on increasing children's awareness of difference in society and a wider world.

The children are well behaved for their age and stage of development. Their good behaviour is supported by the childminder using positive strategies, such as encouraging sharing and praising the children. A friendly partnership with parents enables continuity of care. Discussion with parents at the onset of care helps the childminder to follow parental preferences and share with them her childminding practice. For example, the childminder follows parents' wishes in matters of food and sleep and discusses matters such as behaviour and arrangements for sick children. She provides information for parents through sharing details of the children's activities and nutrition daily.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The home is suitably organised to support rest and play opportunities. Children are able to move freely from the living room to dining area to play and select their playthings. Older children are able to choose their toys as these are adequately organised to be accessible and are kept at a low-level, this encourages their independence. The childminder organises her time to play with the children throughout the day which aids their development. She has completed training

courses to support her practice, for example, first aid including first aid for babies and children, 'Let's all play', 'Understanding play' and 'Birth to three matters'.

All required documentation, except permission for emergency medical advice or treatment, is correctly maintained and confidentially stored. Records are accessible to support children's care and adequate records are kept of children's daily attendance.

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 required to: ensure that children's health was not at risk through accessibility to pets and nappy changing routines; request permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; improve practice in fire safety; and increase personal awareness of child protection issues.

Permission has not yet been obtained from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. However, the childminder has discussed this with parents, obtained verbal permission and the parents have signed the long term medication permission slip, as this was the childminder's understanding of what was required.

Children's health is no longer compromised by access to areas used for pets as the pets are now housed outside and children do not have access. Nappy changing routines have been improved to prevent cross-contamination. A fire evacuation procedure has been devised and practised with the children so they are aware of the procedure and are better protected in the event of a fire. The childminder has undertaken training courses in child protection and is now more confident in supporting children's welfare through better understanding of the child protection procedure.

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 parents' permission to seek medical advice or treatment in the event of an emergency

- preserve children's privacy and dignity during refurbishment of the downstairs toilet
- increase personal knowledge of equal opportunities issues, to provide resources and activities to increase children's awareness of differences and a 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