



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271889
Inspection date	23 June 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 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 2003. She lives with her partner and two children in a semi-detached house in the St Helen Auckland area of County Durham. Public transport systems and local amenities are within walking distance. The whole of the premises are used for childminding purposes. There is a suitable rear garden available for outdoor play. The family does not have any pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under the age of eight years. She is currently caring for five children, two of whom are over the age of eight years and all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder has a recognised childcare qualification to NVQ Level 3, 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 good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are outdoor and indoor activities, which help them develop control of their bodies and enjoy being active, such as jumping on the trampoline, playing twister and trips to soft play. Garden games and trips to local parks to use climbing frames and swings improve children's physical skills. The childminder's good understanding about appropriate types of activities and levels of support gives children confidence to try out new skills and set their own limits.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming home where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care throughout their daily routine. The consistent adult support and guidance helps children gain a good understanding of hygiene and a desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, as they independently visit the toilet and wash and dry their hands. Good records and comprehensive policies and procedures, which are effectively implemented, protect children from illness and infection.

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 different fruits at snack time and helping themselves to drinks throughout the day. In-depth discussions with parents and comprehensive records ensure that children are provided with a healthy, well-balanced diet. The childminder plans weekly menus in advance, which take account of children's individual dietary needs and parental wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe home where the risks are identified and minimised. This means that they are able to move around safely and independently. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of the home. She effectively achieves a good balance between freedom and setting safe limits. This allows children to learn a sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm, for example, as they cross roads, travel in the car and take part in fire drills.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards. The childminder has a good level of awareness of child protection issues and procedures. This means that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Comprehensive written procedures shared with parents ensure that they are fully aware of the childminder's responsibility regarding the protection of children, in line with the local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's home. They are confident and happy. They achieve well because the childminder has a clear understanding of their developmental needs. She plans a good range of stimulating activities with the children which are purposeful and developmentally appropriate. All children access a broad range of experiences that promote and enhance their individual development and learning skills.

Children relate very well to the childminder and to each other. They are developing good social skills through well planned joint games and activities and from visits to local amenities, such as soft play and toddler groups. They enjoy a wide variety of activities which contribute to their imaginative, creative, mathematical and language skills, such as role play, making collages, construction, drawing, painting and listening to stories. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them to develop a strong sense of self.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive attitude towards others and gaining an understanding about the wider world. They are able to access some resources that show positive images of race, gender and culture. However, these are limited and there are no resources that reflect positive images of people with disabilities. They have good opportunities to learn about their local community as they visit parks, shops and the nature reserve.

The childminder has realistic expectations of children's behaviour. She implements a range of very good strategies to promote positive behaviour that help children understand right from wrong. Children respond positively to meaningful praise and encouragement, which contributes to their social skills, confidence and self-esteem, for example, as they share toys, help one another and take turns with joint games. They show care and concern for one another and behave well.

Children benefit from good relationships between the childminder and parents. Good verbal and written communication ensures that children's individual needs are met. A good information package for parents ensures that they are kept very well informed about all aspects of the childminding practice and the care, welfare and progress of their children. However, parents have not signed consent for other persons to care for their child in an emergency.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The well organised environment and good daily routines ensure that children are happy and well settled. Good opportunities are made for free play, focussed activities, social interaction, resting, eating and going out. This means that children are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

The childminder's good knowledge, skills and positive attitude towards extended training enhances the good care of all children. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children and underpin the good quality care.

All policies, procedures and records are shared with parents which contributes to continuity in the children's care and ensures that their individual needs are met. 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 recommendations were made in respect of obtaining written consent for: emergency medical treatment; outings; and transporting children in the car. The childminder has improved her practice by now having a consent form in place which includes parents' written permission to seek emergency medical for children, to take them on outings and to transport them in her car.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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):

- obtain written parental consent for other persons to care for children in the event of an emergency
- increase the range of resources that promote children's awareness of diversity.

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