

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275298
Inspection date	24 July 2007
Inspector	Ann Doubleday

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 was registered in November 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged nine, 12 and 14 in a village near Middleham. The ground floor of the home and the master bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play.

Under the name of Dairy Tots, the childminder works with her sister who is also registered. Together they may care for a maximum of 11 children at any one time. They currently provide care for seven children under five years and seven children between five and eight years. They also care for two children over eight years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Both childminders have joint responsibility for the childminding practice. Children are collected from local schools as well as local pre-schools and nurseries. Family pets include two dogs, two rabbits, two hamsters, two guinea pigs and fish. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Daily opportunities are made for the children to get fresh air and to promote and enjoy their physical development. They play outside in the garden where they use equipment, such as water play, wheeled toys and hopscotch. Indoor activities, such as role play and creative play, are also offered outdoors and children move freely between the indoor and outdoor environment. Children also enjoy visiting the local park, feeding the ducks and the fish and shopping in the local market.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean home, which contributes to their good health and sense of security. Their health is supported by the encouragement of appropriate personal care routines which also allow them to develop their independence, for example, as they wash their hands before eating, before cooking activities and after using the toilet. They also learn about why they need to wash their hands and why they need to use soap. Children also clean their teeth after their lunch. The risk of cross infection is prevented as the children have their own face cloth and towel in the bathroom. Children's health needs are appropriately met as clear accident, sickness and medication procedures are in place. However, written consent has not been requested from parents for seeking medical advice in an emergency and some of the medication records are not fully robust as they are not all signed by parents to acknowledge the entry.

Children enjoy a varied range of healthy meals and snacks. They are offered fresh fruit and vegetables each day and learn about how foods are grown as they plant vegetables in the garden. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's dietary needs are met and takes into account their individual dietary needs when planning the menus. Drinks are offered to the children with their meals and they each have their own labelled water bottles easily accessible in the play areas to ensure they are not thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming home where most risks are identified and minimised. This means they are able to move around freely and safely. For example, household cleaning materials in the kitchen are stored out of children's reach and electric sockets are protected with socket covers. However, cleaning materials in the downstairs toilet are accessible to children and pose a risk. The childminder helps children to understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, as she talks to new children about why the safety gate is in place. There are appropriate procedures in place to keep children safe in the event of an emergency. Fire safety equipment is in place and there is a written emergency evacuation procedure which is practised with the children each term.

Children use a range of good quality toys and equipment which are safe and appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Toys are easily accessible to children in storage boxes in the playroom, this promotes their independence. Children enjoy playing with the resources available. The childminder ensures toys are clean, safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children are effectively safeguarded because the childminder clearly understands her role in child protection. She has a sound awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, and the procedure to follow should a concern arise. She has the contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop a high level of confidence and self-esteem due to the good relationship they have with the childminder. She talks to the children enthusiastically and they respond positively with lots of conversation. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement, which makes them feel good about themselves. They enjoy many interesting activities which support their development and develop confidence, as the childminder talks to them and shows interest in what they are doing.

The childminder has a good understanding of child development and has attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This means children's personal, social and intellectual development is well fostered and supported. Close and caring relationships have been developed between the childminder and the children, which increases children's sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self.

The childminder provides a good variety of interesting activities, both inside and outside the home. There is an appropriate balance between adult directed activities and free play. Activities outside of the home include trips out to the library, outings to feed the ducks and to the ice cream parlour. Children have opportunities to develop their creative skills through activities, such as drawing, painting, singing and listening to music. Baking is a feature of the setting, for example, as children help the childminder to make pizza for lunch and use their senses to explore the feel, colour and taste of flour. Communication skills are well promoted as the childminder talks to and listens to children during play and introduces new words to them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and participate fully in all activities because the childminder values and respects their individuality. Children are very much at home in the childminder's care. Children learn about the local community as they take part in outings to local parks, the ice cream parlour and attend the story time session at the local library. They have access to a range of resources and activities which promote positive images of the wider world, for example, books, dressing up clothes and dolls. The childminder has a good understanding of each child as an individual and uses this to provide activities which children find enjoyable and interesting. She has completed training in the care of children with disabilities.

Children develop good confidence and positive self-esteem through receiving plenty of praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Appropriate methods are used to manage behaviour and children are encouraged to help with tidying up. This helps the children to understand the boundaries set and to behave well.

Trusting partnerships have been established with parents to help promote children's well-being, development and progress. Parents' views about their children's needs are actively sought before the child starts. Parents are kept informed about their child's day and activities through

verbal discussions and the policies and procedures of the setting are shared with them. This enables the childminder to meet children's individual needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children feel at home and at ease with the childminder and in the environment. This means that they are confident to initiate their own play and learning. The record of attendance shows ratios are met, which enables the childminder to give appropriate support and supervision at all times. The childminder has experience of caring for a wide age range of children. She keeps her own knowledge up to date by attending further training, the knowledge gained is used to develop the care that is given to the children. She works well with her co-childminder to provide continuity of care for children.

There are effective systems in place for the daily sharing of information with parents about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. All legally required records and consents are well maintained, available for inspection and stored confidentially.

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 provider agreed to ensure written agreements with parents are in place. She has now a contract with all parents that sets out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child and business arrangements. This ensures children's needs are met.

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):

- request consent from parents for seeking medical advice in an emergency and ensure all medication records are signed by parents to acknowledge the entry

- make sure household cleaning materials in the downstairs bathroom are inaccessible to children.

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