

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY315316
Inspection date	26 February 2008
Inspector	Julie, Anne Swan
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 2005. She lives with her husband and children aged 11 and seven in a residential area of Whitley Bay. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house and the first floor bathroom are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children, under five all day on a variety of part time placements, and one child over five before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy physical play both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy fresh air and physical exercise on regular outings to local parks which contributes to their good health. The childminder has a good understanding of the differing abilities of the children and ensures that equipment

and activities are appropriate to their individual needs. Babies' health is well supported as the childminder follows effective practices when changing and disposing of nappies which reduces the risk of the spread of infection and ensures children are comfortable.

Children's health and wellbeing is supported through the accident and medication documentation. The childminder has developed a policy for sick children, outlining incubation dates and notifiable disease. This is shared with parents and used for reference to ensure any illness can be identified and action taken to ensure children's welfare.

Babies' emotional health is effectively supported as they have a close and warm relationship with the childminder. She provides gentle reassurance as a baby looks a little anxious when visitors are present. Babies' home routines are discussed from the outset and followed to ensure they are provided with consistent care.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy home cooked meals, which have been planned in advance to meet their preferences and dietary needs. Meals include all the food groups and are healthy and nutritious for children. The childminder supports parents' wishes to provide their own foods for children. However, parents are only verbally informed of the intakes of the very young children, which does not always ensure that their diets can be fully monitored.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and well-maintained environment. The childminder safeguards children's welfare by having an excellent awareness of safety. An effective risk assessment is carried out on the premises, toys and activities to ensure potential risks are identified and minimised. Space and resources are organised to allow free space for the children to enjoy and access safely. Children benefit from an effective range of safety measures, for example, cupboard locks, stair gates, socket covers and a range of fire safety equipment. Children's knowledge of emergency evacuation is extended through discussions and regular evacuation practise.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe both in and out of the home. They learn about acceptable behaviour and the impact this has on their safety, for example, children know to hold hands or the buggy when out of the home and to stay together, always in sight of the childminder.

Children have access to well-maintained, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. These are selected according to their age and ability to ensure they gain maximum benefit from them and can play safely with them. Well thought out activities ensure the children's safety at all times. The childminder sets up an appropriate area for non-mobile babies which is comfortable, safe and stimulating. Babies are able to observe the others around them and make selections from a range of toys within their reach.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder is aware of her responsibility to protect the children in her care and has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms to look for and the procedures she needs to adhere to if a concern about a child arose.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are offered a wide range of opportunities and activities both in the home and outside, which encourages and enables them to become more independent through new experiences and challenges. The fully enclosed garden results in children having access to outdoor toys, which helps to promote their gross motor skills. Although activities are pre-planned these are very much subject to the needs and choices of the children.

There are good systems in place for evidencing opportunities undertaken as examples of photographs depicting outings, themed activities and outdoor play are available. Activities in the main centre around themes such as seasons and cultural festivals, and as a result children learn about the wider world. A wide range of age-appropriate toys, resources and play materials are available. These enable the children to experience physical play, art and craft activities, as well as having access to many books. Children are able and encouraged to make independent choices regarding play, with the childminder playing with them to broaden their opportunities and learning.

Children have warm relationships with the childminder. Children approach her for physical comfort and reassurance which contributes to their sense of belonging and well-being. They have opportunities to think for themselves, express their ideas and interact with others by sharing and taking turns. Children's learning and development is extended by the childminder's constant awareness and knowledge of how children learn through play. Children respond happily to the childminder, gaining security to let her leave the room and continue their play. The childminder has an excellent knowledge of them as individuals and demonstrates genuine pleasure in their company.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are looked after in accordance with their parents' wishes because of the effective partnership that the childminder has established with their parents. This helps to ensure that the children's needs are fully met. Parents are kept well informed through daily discussions about the things that their children have done during their time with the childminder. This gives parents the chance to act on issues that they think are important which contributes to the children's general wellbeing. Contracts are used which set out clearly the expectations of both parties. This helps to preserve harmony between the child's parents and the childminder and creates a pleasant atmosphere in which the children can flourish.

Children behave very well and are beginning to understand the consequences of unacceptable behaviour on others. The childminder has good strategies in place for managing behaviour which are appropriate to the children's ages and stages of development.

The children are developing positive and respectful attitudes towards other people through the good example set to them by the childminder. She promotes good manners for instance, which teaches the children to have regard for others and equips them with good social skills. The children form secure relationships with the childminder, demonstrated in the affectionate way they interact with her. This enables the children to trust other people and to experience the emotional benefits of a close relationship.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very well organised. She makes the best use of her time, space and resources to create an orderly and stimulating environment for children. The children are safe, settled, secure and confident within their environment.

All required documentation is up-to-date and well recorded. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare and safety of children. The childminder's detailed portfolio is shared with parents and they are kept fully informed about the service and their child's activities and opportunities. As a result of this they are happy to leave their children in the childminder's care.

Overall, the provision meets the need of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- consider using different channels of communication with parents of very young children to further develop and enhance continuity of care.

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