

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY340069
Inspection date	10 May 2007
Inspector	Jasmin Myles-Wilson

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 2006 and lives with her husband and their child aged five years in their detached house on a newly built residential estate in Bedlington, Northumberland. The whole ground floor is used for childminding and the upstairs bathroom and toilet. There is an enclosed back garden available for outdoor play. The local amenities and public transport systems are within a short walking distance.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time; and is currently minding one child aged under two years, one child aged under five years and two children aged under eight years who are cared for before and after school. The childminder walks to take and collect children from the local school.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends local toddler groups on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good health and hygiene practices are promoted effectively in various ways, for example, daily routines, such as children brushing their teeth after lunch, and creative activities. Children learn about the importance of keeping themselves healthy and free from the spread of infection through discussions with the childminder. They have their own towel which helps to considerably reduce the spread of infections. Good procedures are in place to ensure that sick or seriously injured children are effectively monitored and cared for. The childminder is knowledgeable and confident in dealing with injuries, therefore, injured children receive good care. Children have a good balance of regular energetic and physical activities, which exercises the whole body and opportunities to rest according to their needs, which gives them a sense of well-being.

Healthy eating is promoted well through discussion and posters, thus children's awareness of healthy food is raised. Children enjoy nutritious snacks and meals, for example, children tuck into food and make sounds of enjoyment as they eat, such as 'hmmm'. Children's individual dietary needs are taken into consideration and parents are kept informed of their child's intake. Drinks are accessible to children throughout the day, they are either offered or children ask for them. Older children can independently help themselves to drinks from their individual labelled drinking bottles which are easily accessible.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The warm and welcoming environment encourages children to feel secure and settled. They move freely and safely around areas designated to them. Children are cared for in a well maintained home. The space is organised well so that children have space to either play on the floor, do quiet activities on the settee or do messy activities at the table. Children have access to a wealth and varied range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate equipment and resources, such as cutlery so children can effectively feed themselves. For example, plastic spoons for young children or knives and forks for older children. Resources are extremely well maintained, checked daily and stored suitably so children can access them easily.

The childminder has a high level of awareness of possible danger to children and has taken positive action to effectively minimise risks to them. However, low windows are not kept locked, therefore children's safety is slightly compromised. Children are developing a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. For example, when playing with a road mat and children place their cars near the zebra crossing, the childminder asks 'what do you have to do at the zebra crossing?' Children respond enthusiastically 'stop and see if there are any cars coming'.

Children are safeguarded and their welfare is protected through the childminder being very knowledgeable of child protection procedures. She is confident in her knowledge and has sound understanding to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and deal correctly with such incidents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder actively contributes to meeting children's individual needs through detailed discussions with parents and skilfully making her own observations of the children. Children

settle excellently and have superb connections with the childminder. They consistently engage in activities together and enjoy the exchange of verbal and non-verbal communication, such as smiling and talking as they play imaginatively. Children develop the art of communicating as the childminder does exceedingly well in using good techniques to encourage children's speech, such as using lively voice tones, facial expressions and skilled questioning. For example, the childminder asks children using animated voice tones 'what did you do at nursery today?'. Children enthusiastically explain what they do at nursery while the childminder listens intently. Young children are challenged vocally as they try to mimic words which the childminder says, such as banana or try to roar like a lion. Children's learning is extended as the childminder provides activities which re-enforce school topics. For example, the school topic is traditional stories so the childminder provides story sacks then children re-enact stories, such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' or 'The Gingerbread Man'.

Children have very good opportunities to develop in confidence and explore the environment. They make decisions about what they want to do, which builds up their confidence and independence. The childminder is close by and readily available to assist whenever there is a need to. Children receive animated praise and encouragement from the childminder and their self-esteem develops as they feel valued. The childminder uses a flexible written daily plan of activities for the children. Children enjoy a wealth of activities and experiences that give optimal challenges and creativity, such as junk modelling. They also have access an excellent range of natural materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good level of awareness regarding diversity and their understanding is being enlightened of the world and their community. For example, children learn to appreciate and accept people who are different to them through discussions they have with the childminder. The childminder actively promotes equality and diversity through the resources she provides, such as various gender toys and celebrating different cultural festivals. She has a sound understanding of equality and is a good role model. Children form positive relationships with the childminder and this is clearly seen through the tactile way they interact together. Their self-esteem and confidence is developing as they are encouraged to be independent. For example, young children are encouraged to feed themselves and older children are encouraged to take care of their personal needs, such as accessing the toilet area by themselves.

Children know what is expected of them as they are taught to share and reminded of how to behave in an acceptable way. The childminder uses effective behaviour management strategies to achieve positive behaviour from children, such as distraction and praise. Therefore, children's self-esteem is built up and their confidence goes from strength to strength.

Good partnerships with parents are fostered and children benefit from this as they are settled in a relaxed atmosphere. Very detailed written information and standard policies are shared with parents so they know about the service provided. Information regarding their children is exchanged in a variety of ways, such as daily diaries or informal chats. This ensures that children receive continuity of care and their individual needs are met well.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from being in an exceptionally well organised environment so that they feel relaxed, confident and can move independently and safely around the space. They are supervised exceedingly well as the childminder is aware of their safety and well-being at all times. The childminder gives consistently high priority to developing her knowledge and enhancing her practice through training. This means that she can be outstanding in meeting children's individual needs, therefore, children benefit from this through the care they receive. The flexible, inspiring range of activities and routines highly motivate children to be stimulated and interested.

The childminder keeps highly comprehensive and very detailed information and documentation which enhances the service provided as all of it is relevant and very well-organised. The exceptional display of certificates and other information of interest for parents, such as weekly menus, show the professionalism of the childminder and her commitment to the service she provides. The childminder discusses and shares all relevant documentation with parents. The childminder has superb knowledge and understanding of what Ofsted expects of her, for example, she realises her responsibility is to inform Ofsted when there are any significant changes or events.

Overall, the provision meets the needs 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):

- enhance safety procedures already in place

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