

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342612
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Inspector	Jayne Utting
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 lives with her partner and two children aged four years and 18 months in Kenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The home is situated in a residential area close to the local schools, shops and other community facilities. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and the two children's bedrooms are used for overnight care. The secure front garden can be used for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children and currently has three on roll. Overnight care is available for two children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming home, where they begin to learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care throughout their daily routine. Consistent adult support and guidance helps children gain a good understanding of hygiene and become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, washing their hands before eating, after playing outside and after using the bathroom. The childminder effectively implements a range of good hygiene procedures which reduce the risk of illness and cross-infection. These

include washing her hands before preparing food and wiping down all tops and tables. Children have their own individual towels which further prevents the spread of infection. Cleaning teeth after breakfast is encouraged by the childminder and children have their own toothbrush. A recent first aid certificate, clear policies regarding sick children and the effective recording of all emergency contacts and accidents promotes children's health and well-being.

Children have access to some physical activities, for example, walking to school, playing in the park and visits to soft play. The childminder achieves a good balance between busy and quieter times, having a flexible routine which enables older children to relax, read books, do jigsaws or watch some television when they are tired. The childminder observes the home sleep routines of the youngest children in her care, they are made comfortable and enjoy well supervised, uninterrupted sleep periods.

Children enjoy an adequate range of meals and snacks which include plenty of fresh fruit. Good ongoing communication with parents ensures that the childminder has a clear understanding of the individual dietary needs of each child in her care and takes into account any likes or dislikes. Children are encouraged to sit together at the table for their meals and this is treated as a social occasion. Children have free access to drinks throughout the day and are offered suitable drinks such as fruit juice, milk and water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, where the risks are identified and minimised. Children are safe due to a combination of close supervision by the childminder and the appropriate use of safety equipment such as smoke alarms, a boxed in fire, fire blanket, socket covers and thermostatically controlled radiators. The childminder effectively achieves a good balance between freedom and safety. Children learn to keep themselves safe on the premises as the childminder gives clear guidelines which she subtly reinforces with sensitive reminders, such as to pick up toys when they have finished with them. There is an appropriate emergency evacuation procedure in place although this has yet to be practised with the children. Smoke alarms are in place, regularly checked and a record is kept of this.

The childminder has effective procedures in place to keep children safe when outdoors. Younger children are appropriately strapped into a buggy, whilst older children hold hands when out walking and are encouraged to practise road safety procedures. The childminder implements effective safety practices for outings, carrying a mobile phone and emergency contact details, as well as taking other appropriate equipment, including drinks, first aid kit, snacks and sun creams as necessary. The childminder has written consent in place to take children on public transport, ensuring children's welfare is safeguarded. Appropriate consent is also in place for trips and outings.

Rooms are well organised so children have space to play safely and they are able to access toys and activities easily. Toys and equipment are varied, age-appropriate and in good condition, with the childminder undertaking regular checks.

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues and her responsibilities in this area. She has recently attended a safeguarding children course, and has a secure knowledge of the procedures to follow should she have any concerns about a child's welfare. This is reinforced through a clear and comprehensive policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the childminder's home and are confident and happy. She plans and provides a broad range of stimulating and interesting activities for the children which are purposeful and promote learning and development well. For example, children enjoy playing with the wide range of good quality toys available and have fun at soft play. Involved in the children's activities, the childminder helps and encourages them to move onto different activities when appropriate, so that they are fully occupied and remain interested in their play, asking appropriate open-ended questions that make them think and respond.

Children enjoy good opportunities to socialise with their peers attending local toddler and childminder groups. They enjoy a range of activities which contribute to the development of their imaginative, creative and language skills, such as reading, drawing, painting, baking and gluing. Close, caring relationships help to increase children's sense of trust and further develop their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for as individuals, with differences acknowledged and celebrated. However, there is limited opportunity for children to learn about cultures other than their own and the childminder has a limited range of resources on offer which reflect images of ethnicity, disability and other cultures. This impacts on children's developing understanding of the wider world. Children learn about the community they live in through visits to local facilities, including the park and local childminding groups.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards caring for children with learning difficulties or disabilities and recognises this as an area for further professional development. She demonstrates a good understanding of the needs of individual children and is committed to working with parents and other professionals to ensure children's ongoing individual development.

Children develop self-confidence well because they receive lots of praise and encouragement and they respond well to the childminder. She has realistic expectations of their behaviour and implements a range of age-appropriate strategies to promote good behaviour and help children learn right from wrong. They are encouraged to share, relate well to one another and behave well. The childminder is patient, kind and understanding with children and they are responsive towards her. She ensures their individual needs are met by spending quality one-to-one time with each child. This enables the children to understand that they are valued and cared for as individuals.

Relationships with parents are promoted and developed well. Parents are informed about key policies and procedures at registration, including the complaints procedure and Ofsted's contact details are readily displayed. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress on a daily basis through verbal feedback at the end of the day and the youngest children have a daily diary in which the childminder records information on sleeps and food eaten that day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for and feel at home in a well organised home that keeps them safe and secure. Toys and resources are organised effectively, enabling all children to access them independently and allowing them to make free choices about their play and learning.

Documentation is well organised with children's individual files in place, records up to date and effective written policies and procedures in place. Confidential information is kept in a locked filing box. The childminder's registration certificate is prominently displayed in the kitchen along with her first aid certificate and Ofsted's contact details. All adults living in the house have undergone the relevant checks to ensure their suitability to be in close proximity to children.

Committed to ongoing personal development, the childminder has recently attended a number of relevant short courses, including safeguarding children and first aid. The childminder has drawn up questionnaires which she intends to use to monitor and review her practice.

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

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):

- carry out emergency evacuation procedure with children
- provide opportunities and resources for children to learn about 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