

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348058
Inspection date	25 July 2007
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar

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 February 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged 10 years and four years old. The family live in a house in the Eastbourne area of Darlington. The ground floor plus the bathroom and small front bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently caring for one child aged nine months old on a part time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Young children are helped to stay healthy because the childminder implements an effective sickness policy and does not hesitate to contact parents of children who are sick. This protects the health of all children in her care. She gives high priority to cleanliness in her home which ensures children are cared for in a healthy environment. There are clear health and safety

policies in place which are available to parents. These contribute well to keeping children healthy. There are effective nappy changing routines in place. Young babies thrive as they enjoy warm, mutual affirmative relationships with the childminder which promotes their emotional well-being. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate. She has a well stocked first aid box, the contents of which are checked regularly. Robust systems are in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication.

Children are suitably nourished because they are regularly fed in accordance with their own home routines. The childminder minimises any risk to children by storing the food appropriately and preparing it in line with parents or manufacturers recommendations. Young children are encouraged to be independent at snack times with access to 'finger foods' such as chopped banana's and vegetables. The childminder sits close to offer practical support and assistance. Drinks are continually accessible to children because the childminder ensures they are kept refilled, within easy reach and in recognisable cups. This promotes their continuing self-confidence and independence.

Children enjoy physical activity regularly. For example, they are taken outdoors and experience fresh air each day; a particular favourite is walks to the local park where they can develop their physical skills on suitable play equipment for very young children. Indoors, very young children explore using a range of equipment, such as push along toys and bouncing on the small trampoline. As babies become more mobile and their boundaries widen, they are beginning to make choice as they explore the environment. The childminder ensures their safety as she helps them to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have space to play in a homely environment where risks are minimised to ensure their safety. The childminder takes action to ensure children are safe whilst in her care through identifying possible risks or hazards; putting safety precautions in place, such as socket covers and safety gates; and by ensuring children cannot access harmful substances. Children's safety is further promoted by the childminder carrying out regular checks on toys and equipment. Children are well supervised, both indoors and outdoors, to ensure their safety at all times. They are kept safe on outings because the childminder makes sure that they are securely strapped into a pushchair. Babies are given opportunities to practise what they can do, such as crawling and walking in safe surroundings. Appropriate safety and fire-fighting equipment is provided within the home and a written emergency evacuation procedure is in place.

The childminder works directly with the children and is vigilant as they play and this keeps them safe. For example, children are closely supervised as the childminder is always down on the floor with them. Children thrive in the warm environment. Many activities take place in the living room, where children access safe toys and equipment. The childminder constantly develops the resources to provide variety. All are kept clean, are in good condition and presented invitingly to children at floor level. This successfully promotes children's developing independence.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding of her responsibilities within child protection procedures. Her willingness to record any concerns and to discuss these with parents ensures that the welfare of children in her care is given priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder knows the children well and she uses regular daily routines that take account of their needs, such as mealtimes, and rest-times. She interacts positively with the children, giving them support, comfort and reassurance. As a result, they are developing a sound sense of trust and security. The childminder is very sensitive to individual needs and continuously looks for ways to enrich their experiences, incorporating in her practice. Children enjoy many interesting activities using a wide range of stimulating resources, which support and challenge their development. They develop confidence as the childminder talks to them and shows interest in what they are doing. She observes children's play carefully, finding out what they enjoy and can do, so that she plans experiences to develop new skills and extend their learning. Written planning and records of children's achievements are shared with parents.

Children become engrossed in activities that engage them, for example, playing with treasure baskets, and filling and emptying the toy box. They explore brightly coloured toys and different textures. Children gain enjoyment from the broad range of activities they take part in. These are age-appropriate and provide good levels of challenge. Activities within the childminder's home are diverse and interesting. Good, warm and caring relationships between the childminder and the children are evident as they play contently. Very young children enjoy making music and sounds with a range of musical instruments. They explore their senses with a range of natural materials. The childminder promotes children's early language and communication skills by constantly talking to children and they are beginning to echo her sounds.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder works in very close partnership with parents. She encourages parents to spend time with her, getting to know each other, as they settle their child. She uses written diaries very effectively to exchange information with parents each day, as well as daily verbal feedback. This strongly fosters children's sense of belonging. She talks with parents about her child care practice and a portfolio of information about the setting and qualifications is available for them to read. Parents also access detailed written policies and procedures. The childminder actively encourages parents to share any concerns and deals with these with sensitivity and in confidence. She is familiar with current guidance about dealing with complaints. However, she has not yet established a recording system but has not received any complaints.

Children feel valued because the childminder puts considerable care into meeting their individual needs and takes time to speak regularly with parents. The childminder is a good role model for children's behaviour. She talks calmly and quietly to children at all times, listens to them and responds positively and affectionately towards them. Children receive plenty of her time and attention, which has a positive impact on their behaviour. Children's awareness of their local community is raised well by a wide variety of outings. Children go to the local shops and enjoy visiting the park. The childminder has a satisfactory range of resources which reflect diversity, but she recognises that this is an for development. She has no experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, but can demonstrate how she would care for all children in a caring and professional manner.

Children become familiar with the relaxed daily routines and enjoy warm and trusting relationships with the childminder. They confidently let the childminder know what they want

to play with, mostly through non-verbal communication. The childminder knows them well and responds warmly to their needs and likes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy a well-organised environment, where their individual needs are met very effectively by flexible and responsive routines based on information from parents. The childminder plans enjoyable experiences for children, which enhance their learning and development. She introduces children to a wide and varied range of activities and provides opportunities for them to make choices in their play. The childminder accesses a wide range of training and development opportunities; this contributes to her ability to plan enjoyable experiences for children, enhancing their learning and development.

The childminder has good systems in place to support her working practices and promote children's care and well-being. Comprehensive, written policies support her consistent and professional practice, so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. She exchanges information with parents on a daily basis and maintains required records appropriately.

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 complaint 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):

- put in place the planned system for the recording of complaints
- develop the resources to reflect positive images 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