

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY352865
Inspection date	16 April 2008
Inspector	Donna Suzanne Lancaster
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 July 2007. She lives with her husband and their child aged eight years in Catterick Garrison. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a cat and fish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and she may provide overnight care for no more than two children under eight years. There are currently 11 children on roll, of whom, six are aged under eight years. Children attend on a part time basis including for before and after school care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home which contributes to their good health and sense of security. The childminder has good systems in place to fully promote the children's health needs, for example, appropriate documentation for the recording of accidents, administration of medication and the exclusion of sick children. However, the childminder has not obtained

written parental consent for medication which may need to be administered if a child becomes ill during the childminding day. This has not adversely affected any child so far, but children's health is compromised because currently no medication can be given until the parent is able to collect the child. Children are beginning to develop self-care skills as a result of the childminder setting a good example and teaching them the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, pictures and explanations of hand washing routines are displayed at child-level in the toilet, reminding children to wash their hands. Children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs. Feeding and nappy changing takes place in accordance with each child's needs and not as part of the childminder's routine.

Babies keenly take an interest in the suitable range of activities on offer to them, such as sensory toys. They are taken for walks within the local environment and enjoy a range of physical activities to help them develop their good health. For example, children dance and do exercises to music. Babies develop hand-eye coordination as they handle the various resources. Older children enjoy a wide range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. Regular trips to the local playground and frequent walks within the local community provide opportunities for children to gain fresh air and to exert their energy. They also have access to a secure and safe garden area which is suitably equipped with a range of challenging resources to develop increased control and coordination.

The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's dietary requirements are met. The childminder provides children with healthy nutritious meals and snacks, for example, ham, yoghurts, cherry tomatoes and cheese. Fresh fruit and vegetables are also part of the children's diet on a daily basis. The childminder displays pictures and has books depicting healthy foods, this enables children to discuss and talk about healthy lifestyles which helps to further promote their knowledge and understanding of healthy eating for their growth and development. The childminder ensures children are provided with regular drinks so they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can move freely to select from a wealth of varied and imaginative toys and resources. All equipment is of good quality, age appropriate and safe. Toys are very well organised to allow children to make independent choices in their play and this helps to improve their confidence and independence skills.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment with good safety features in place to protect them, such as socket covers and safety gates which prevent children accessing the stairs and kitchen. Fire procedures are in place and the childminder talks frequently to the children about how to get out of the house quickly and meet in a safe place away from the home. However, children have not yet practised an evacuation and fire procedures are not yet in place when caring for children overnight. This may at times put children's safety at risk. Thorough procedures are in place to ensure children are safe when on outings, for example, children are always securely strapped into a buggy, or they are transported in the car using correctly fitted car safety seats.

The childminder is very secure and confident in her ability to protect children, she has a good knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow in the event of a concern. She has written information, which she shares with parents, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem because the childminder welcomes them warmly into her home, and considers their needs above all others. She praises them freely, talks to them frequently and is endlessly patient in her approach to the children. They clearly feel comfortable and secure in their surroundings, and respond with smiles and laughter. Minded children are affectionate with each other which shows that they are forming positive relationships.

Young children show great interest in what they do, for example, they are totally engaged in appropriate activities, such as looking at books with the childminder, pointing to interesting objects and toys around the room, they try to fit the shapes into the shape sorter and are praised by the childminder when they succeed. Although children have not yet developed sufficient vocabulary to ask questions, they are very confident and make their needs well known to the childminder as they point to toys they would like to play with. She responds positively and provides the words to help build their developing vocabulary. Children acquire new knowledge and skills as they carefully turn the pages on the books and turn the keys on the musical activity toys. Activities for very young children are interesting and entirely appropriate. The childminder has a sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to further enhance outcomes for children.

The activities provided enable children of all ages to successfully build on what they know and can do in a relaxed and supportive environment. As a result, their overall development is being promoted well. The children benefit greatly from enjoyable and stimulating play activities, such as imaginative play, construction and messy play. Children have opportunities to learn about wider society through regular walks in the community, nature walks and looking at the different backgrounds we come from. Children enjoy an abundance of art and craft activities which adorn the playroom. In school holidays, activities and outings are planned to suit the ages of the children attending.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a very caring environment where children's individual needs are met on a daily basis. They access a growing range of resources that support their understanding of diversity and disabilities. They learn about their local community as they visit places of interest and have opportunities to explore activities linking to seasons and celebrations. Whilst there are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities, children have access to resources that promote positive discussions about the differing needs of others. The childminder is eager to attend training in this area to further develop her knowledge and understanding of the considerations necessary when offering this level of service.

A strong partnership with parents ensures that a sense of mutual trust is fostered with the childminder. Detailed records are obtained as parents are informed of the reasons why certain information is required in order for the childminder to care for their children as they would wish. Daily verbal feedback is given regarding how the children have been and what activities they have enjoyed. This is expanded upon by the use of a daily journal which is effective as a two-way exchange of information. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with the childminder.

Children understand responsible behaviour and respond well to the secure and consistent boundaries that the childminder has in place, which helps them feel secure. Their good behaviour is successfully fostered through praise and encouragement. Good manners are strongly encouraged and even the very youngest children are polite. They say please, thank you and tidy away well, with good support from the childminder. Children make choices and take decisions, which promotes their independence.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is a good role model and promotes children's welfare, enabling them to participate actively and make good progress within a structured and safe environment. There is good play space and toys are organised to allow children to access them easily. The childminder is very passionate and enthusiastic about caring for children and has a high regard for the well-being of all children. She clearly considers children's needs above all others and it is evident that strong attachments have been formed. The childminder is developing a very professional approach to childminding. She discusses and explains her childcare practice with parents clearly. This helps parents to feel confident and happy to leave their children in her care. A clear and positive attitude towards ongoing professional development is demonstrated and she intends to continue accessing courses to enhance and develop her knowledge and understanding of childcare issues.

There are effective systems in place for the daily sharing of information with parents and carers about the service and their child's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Most documentation and required records are in place and are stored with high regard for confidentiality. Attendance records and observation indicate that adult-to-child ratios are effectively maintained. The childminder has high regard for the well-being of all children and they receive good adult support and attention.

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):

- ensure that there is parental permission for any medication that may need to be administered, should a child become ill during the childminding day
- further develop the fire evacuation procedures to include the provision to practise them when children are present and when caring for children overnight.

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