

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 317167
Inspection date 15 May 2007
Inspector Stephen Andrew Blake

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 1984. She lives with her husband and three children all aged 12 years or over, in their eight bedroom terraced home in a residential area approximately one mile from Carlisle city centre. The whole of the premises except the first floor, conservatory, rear stairs and front garden are used for childminding. There is a large and fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to mind alone and also to work with an assistant. When working alone, the childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of 6 children. When working with an assistant, the childminder may provide care to a maximum of 10 children. At present there are seven children on her roll. The childminder has use of her car to take children to and collect children from local schools. The childminder supports children with disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their health, for example, when visiting local soft play centres, using the garden or participating in a range of indoor activities. Through effective organisation, the childminder enables children to access a range of good quality and age-appropriate resources that promote their physical development. Younger children participate fully in all activities because the childminder has an appropriate understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well-maintained environment. They are developing an age-appropriate understanding of health and hygiene through the childminder's encouragement and modelling, for example, when washing children's hands before snacks and after a model-making activity. The childminder implements generally effective systems to safeguard children's health and hygiene, for example, through a safe and hygienic nappy changing procedure. The system for recording parents' prior consent for the administration of medication is not robust.

The childminder organises her feeding routine in accordance with the child's needs and parental wishes. Children benefit from a varied and nutritious diet because the childminder has an appropriate understanding of healthy eating and has established systems to plan varied and interesting menus. She has effective systems for the storage and preparation of food and for the recording of individual dietary needs. This helps children to stay healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a spacious home where risks are identified and minimised, for example, through daily written risk assessments and regular monitoring of toys and equipment to ensure that they are age-appropriate and do not pose a hazard to children. The indoor and outdoor environment is secure and the childminder uses a good range of appropriate equipment in order to meet the needs and safeguard the safety of all children. The childminder gives a high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe and to maintaining children's safety outside the home, for example, in having appropriate procedures for outings.

Children independently select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment, which meet safety standards. The childminder carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys to make sure they are safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development. The childminder has established effective systems to ensure that children stay safe, for example, through appropriate supervision ratios, fire safety and for the security of the premises. She implements generally effective written procedures to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. She has not established a procedure for obtaining parental consent for children to travel in the childminder's car. Children are safeguarded because the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has a good understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are enabled to relax and settle quickly in the childminder's home because she has created a well-organised and welcoming environment. They relate well to each other and socialise with other children, for example, through regular attendance at local toddler groups and visits to soft play centres.

Children become independent as they choose from a planned variety of toys, books and activities which appeal to all. The childminder effectively monitors chosen activities to ensure they are appropriate for the age and stage of development for each child. Children listen and respond with enthusiasm as the childminder enhances their learning and play experiences with a range of good questions. She uses her sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to adapt activities, such as painting, model-making and story-telling to promote younger children's learning. Children enjoy and achieve because the childminder supports them in their choice of activities and this promotes their independence. She has effective systems to recognise and celebrate children's achievement, for example, by displaying artwork on the kitchen wall, and this promotes their self-esteem.

Children's care and learning is enhanced because the childminder draws upon her knowledge and extensive experience of early years child development. She has established effective routines to balance periods of activity with opportunities to rest. The childminder is proactive in developing her knowledge and understanding of child development through participation on local training courses. This helps children to enjoy and achieve.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder provides a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase children's awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children are learning about their local community as they participate in a good range of activities, for example, when attending local toddler groups, going for walks and visiting local shops to buy fruit for their snacks.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their individual needs are met well as they follow their normal daily routine as discussed and recorded with their parents. The childminder has an effective partnership with parents and shares a good range of well-written documents relating to her childminding practice and children's individual activities and routines. For example, through a well-written complaints procedure and a leaflet outlining the childminder's policies and services.

Children are encouraged to make themselves at home and are involved in deciding what to do. They behave well because the childminder employs sensitive and age-appropriate behaviour management strategies, for example, by using positive reinforcement. The childminder has an appropriate understanding of equal opportunities and a very good understanding of disabilities. She is effective in working closely with parents and outside agencies in order to support children with disabilities. This helps all children to make a positive contribution.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are at ease in the childminder's well-organised environment, for example, in her use of available space, well-established routine and the pre-arranged accessible resources. With careful and sensitive support, children are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Individual children's records are stored confidentially and shared regularly with parents to keep them well-informed about the childminding service and their child's activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care.

The childminder works occasionally with co-minders and takes overall responsibility for maintaining appropriate records and for planning the daily childcare routine. Effective planning systems are monitored and adapted to keep children safe and to enable them to make good progress in all areas of their development. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has reviewed her garden to ensure that plants do not pose a risk to children, removed the lean-to building and made garden waste inaccessible to children. This improves children's health and safety.

The childminder has reviewed her documentation to ensure that contracts are available for each minded child. She has also established systems to document parental consent with regard to the administration of first aid, to ensure confidentiality when recording children's accidents, and has ensured that written details relating to the childminder's car insurance showing business use are now available. This helps children to make a positive contribution and improves the childminder's organisation.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- review the current procedure to ensure the childminder and any assistant does not administer any medicine or other treatment to children unless the parent has discussed its use and given prior written permission
- ensure that parents give written permission for their child to be transported in a vehicle.

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