

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	402997
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Noreen Elizabeth Appleby
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. 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 1990. She lives with her husband in a house in Stocksfield. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Toilet and hand washing facilities are on the first floor. Minded children do not access any other first floor rooms. An enclosed garden, at the back of the house, is available for outdoor play. There are schools, pre-schools and toddler groups within the local area, as well as parks, shops and local amenities.

The childminder is registered for a maximum of six children at any one time. She is presently caring for 14 children aged from one to seven years, as well as three children aged over eight years. All children are cared for on a part-time basis.

The family has a pet cat and two pet rabbits.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She takes children to, and collects them from, nursery or school. She also takes younger children to toddler groups.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Suitable daily routines ensure children are cared for in a clean environment and help them to learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care. For example, the childminder regularly cleans the floors, bathroom and food preparation surfaces. She also teaches the children to wash their hands after using the bathroom, before they eat and after they have been near the pets. Children use individual towels and facecloths, which reduces the risk of cross infection. There are suitable plans in place to record children's medication, including written parental consents. The childminder also has parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice, if required. She holds a current first aid certificate, which enables her to manage children's minor accidents confidently. However, antiseptic creams have occasionally been used without parental consent and accidents are not always thoroughly recorded to clarify whether any treatment has been administered. Written information has been drafted to inform parents and carers of suitable procedures for excluding children who are sick or contagious. This contributes towards maintaining children's good health.

Children's dietary needs are discussed and agreed with parents. Younger children usually bring their own foodstuffs, which the childminder refrigerates and re-heats appropriately. Older children enjoy meals and snacks which the childminder provides. The childminder encourages them to eat healthily, for example, by providing ham and cheese pasta, healthy sandwiches and fresh fruit. Children also have treats, such as crisps and biscuits. They sit together around the dining table for meals. Younger children are learning to feed themselves and all children are learning to use suitable table manners. Children are adequately hydrated throughout the day. Younger ones have their own beakers and enjoy free access to drinks. Older ones are offered suitable drinks, such as water or juice, when they come in from school.

Children enjoy daily activities that contribute towards their physical health. The childminder does not have use of a car, so they regularly walk to various settings, including collecting older children from school. This enables them to benefit from plenty of fresh air. Children also enjoy supervised access to a good range of large equipment as they go to toddler group, soft play, the local park or play in the garden. They enjoy using slides, climbing frames, ride-on toys and games equipment. These opportunities encourage children to be active, which improves their fitness levels. In addition they are learning to balance and coordinate their movements, whilst enjoying fun play activities.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a home which is suitable and secure. No detailed risk assessment has been completed but the childminder is vigilant in ensuring risks are adequately minimised, both indoors and out, so children can move around freely and safely. Suitable safety equipment, such as socket covers, stair gates and cupboard locks are also used to contribute towards keeping children safe. Smoke detectors and a fire blanket are in place and an emergency evacuation plan has been drafted. The childminder practises occasional fire drills with the children to help them understand what to do in an emergency. In addition, she teaches them appropriate road safety routines when they are walking out of doors, which helps them to learn about keeping themselves safe.

Children enjoy a sound range of developmentally appropriate toys and play materials which stimulate their interest and learning. Resources are suitably maintained in a clean and safe condition. Play areas are creatively organised to provide children with sufficient space, whilst allowing them to access resources independently. This enables them to develop confidence as they make individual choices about their play. Older children are encouraged to consider safety issues by ensuring younger ones do not access inappropriate items and the childminder closely monitors the children to ensure their safety and welfare.

To date, the childminder has not accessed child protection training and she does not have a copy of the local authority procedures or the 'What to do' leaflet distributed by the Department of Health. Through discussion, she demonstrates a basic understanding of issues, but she is not confident and secure in her knowledge of child protection. Therefore, present arrangements do not verify that children are effectively protected in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of stimulating activities, which include indoor play and regular outings. The childminder considers children's ages, stages of development and interests when informally planning activities. This enhances children's enjoyment and promotes their learning and development well. For example, young children enjoy using small world resources, playing with musical toys or looking at books with the childminder. They regularly go to toddler group where they develop social skills as they learn to interact with other children and adults. They have good opportunities to use large equipment, take part in art and craft activities or explore a good range of cognitive resources. Children sometimes go to the soft play centre where they learn to climb and balance as they explore enthusiastically. They also enjoy local walks, trips to the park or playing in the garden. They enjoy using the slide, climbing frame and water trough or playing ball games. On sunny days they like to take small resources such as the farm set, jigsaws or construction out of doors and sit playing at the patio table or under the garden canopy.

Interaction between the children and childminder is very positive. She works alongside the children, allowing them to explore and develop their play, yet asking and responding to questions to support and extend their learning well. They readily approach her throughout their play and have obviously formed good relationships with her, which helps them to feel happy and settled. Children are also forming good friendships with each other. Older ones play cooperatively as they take turns when playing games or as they build and construct imaginatively with plastic bricks. Some also enjoy playing with younger ones, for example, as they use small world resources together. Through discussion the children confirm they enjoy coming to the childminder and sharing fun experiences together. The childminder provides lots of encouragement and purposeful praise. This enhances children's confidence and self esteem.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and their families are treated with equal respect and concern. The childminder includes sound practices in her daily routines to meet children's individual needs, which contributes towards their continuity of care. Gender issues are suitably promoted through free choice of equipment. Children are adequately learning about differing abilities, diversity and the wider

world. For example, they access relevant resources such as books and ethnic dolls and they made Chinese dragons to celebrate Chinese New Year. Regular outings, such as going to toddler group, the park or the soft play centre, help children to develop a sound sense of community. They also have suitable opportunities to make decisions, such as self-selecting toys or talking about activities and outings. The childminder takes time to listen to them and respect their thoughts and opinions. She knows the children well and gives them good encouragement and support, so all children can be fully included.

The childminder uses positive behaviour management practices which are suitable for children's levels of understanding and maturity. For example, she ensures the children are well occupied and closely supervised and she uses appropriate speech and clear explanations so they develop a clear understanding of what is expected of them. As a result, they are generally well behaved and show care and consideration for each other. Challenging behaviour is adequately managed, although on occasion, the childminder has used a 'naughty stair' which undermines children's self esteem.

The childminder has formed sound working relationships with parents and carers. Information about children's home routines and the childminder's practices and procedures is appropriately exchanged with them during introductory visits. This enables the children to settle in comfortably. Formal contracts and written agreements are appropriately maintained. The childminder also discusses children's care routines and activities when parents and carers bring or collect the children. This keeps them up to date with relevant issues. Comments available from parents and carers indicate that they are very happy with the quality of care provided.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled as a result of regular, but flexible, routines which meet their needs, and a suitably organised environment. The childminder closely supervises the children and ensures they are well cared for. Appropriate checks have been completed for adults living in the family home, which contributes to children's safety and welfare. The childminder has completed a relevant first aid certificate and attended a training course to develop her knowledge of the 'Early years foundation stage' curriculum. This enables her to develop her knowledge and improve her child care practice.

Suitable documentation systems have been set up to support the childcare. Most records are adequately maintained in line with the National Standards and the childminder ensures personal information is confidentially stored. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of recommendations raised at the last inspection the childminder has begun to draft policies and procedures to share information consistently with parents and carers. In addition, she has fitted new stair rails, which improves safety arrangements for children.

## **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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve accident procedures by obtaining parental consent prior to using antiseptic cream and by developing the accident log to clarify whether any treatment has been administered.
- improve knowledge of child protection issues and develop a procedure which complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)