



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125147
Inspection date	23 May 2006
Inspector	Jackie Liffen
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 1992. She lives with her 2 children aged 16 and 18 in Tonbridge, Kent. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding plus the bathroom and a bedroom upstairs, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 5 children at any one time and is currently minding 5 children under 5 part-time, and 4 children over 5 out-of-school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local toddler groups. The family have 2 cats.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally protected from infection by the childminder who uses a special protective gel to wipe their hands before they eat. The childminder also wipes surfaces and the changing mat with anti-bacterial cleanser when necessary to ensure that children are not exposed to unwanted germs. However, some toys, which babies put in their mouths, are not being washed straight away after use, making the transmission of germs possible. Children who are suffering from an infection are not welcomed into the childminder's home and if they become ill whilst in her care, then she contacts parents so that children's well-being is a priority.

Children are well cared for if they have an accident because the childminder holds an up-to-date first-aid certificate and is familiar with the routines. She ensures continuity of care by checking that the accident book is fully completed and signed by parents. Some children are beginning to learn simple good health and hygiene practices when they visit the bathroom and wash their hands on the clean towel provided. Children tend to sleep in the afternoon when they become tired, although some are becoming increasingly aware of their own needs and ask to be put in the cot earlier. Children exercise regularly when they go to the park or walk to school; they also have opportunities to take part in regular physical activity both indoors, when they dance to music, and in the garden. Children are well fed by the childminder who provides nutritious and sustaining snacks and meals. Children help themselves to drinks whenever they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy themselves playing freely through the lounge, dining room and playroom, where the childminder keeps them safe by using strategies such as a soft cover on the hearth. However, the garden is not risk assessed, and there are some hazards which require that the children play under close supervision. Children are familiar with the environment and easily help themselves to a number of toys which are scattered around the playroom. They reach their potential because the childminder provides children with suitable and safe equipment and activities according to their development stage.

Children are beginning to learn to avoid accidental injury as the childminder helps them down the steep step into the garden. They are unable to access any dangerous substances in the kitchen because the childminder keeps everything, including medicines and cleaning materials, out of reach in a locked cupboard. Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder uses recommended car seats and reins. The childminder prepares for children's emergencies by taking a first-aid kit and emergency telephone numbers on all outings. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder, who is able to recognise abuse and knows whom to contact if she has concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very quickly at the setting where they are confident enough to make decisions and investigate independently the familiar, comfortable, home. They are involved in a broad range of activities and spontaneous events which the childminder plans using the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters frameworks. Children progress rapidly because the childminder has a very good knowledge of their interests and capabilities.

Children gain in self-esteem and autonomy because the childminder introduces them to a number of good choices, for example she helps children to select which book they would like to look at. Children happily explore their surroundings, confidently helping themselves to toys from the large range on offer. They respond extremely well to the childminder who is always interested in what they do and say, for example the two year old is becoming very articulate as she chooses which piece of fruit she would like to eat. All children have their physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs met by the childminder, who treats them as she would her own, and takes them on outings to places such as toddler groups. Children are beginning to relate extremely well to others because the childminder includes all of them in the activities, for instance she sits on the floor with two children on her lap, when reading a story.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All the children are involved and interested in what is happening because each one is valued and included by the childminder, who knows their existing abilities and builds on these individually to help children reach their potential. Children benefit from a number of activities and resources which help them value diversity, for example, they undertake different projects and celebrate a variety of religious festivals. Children also play with toys depicting positive images of people with different skin-tones, for example black and Chinese dolls, puzzles and books. Children have their specific needs met by the childminder who is experienced in caring for children with disabilities. By working with parents and professionals the childminder cares well for all children with special needs, giving them the attention they need to thrive and develop.

Children's continuity of care is enhanced by the childminder who builds up professional relationships and works well with parents so that children reach their potential. Although she is not writing any home/setting diaries at the moment, children benefit from the fact that the childminder communicates effectively, verbally with parents each time they meet. Children learn to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour because the childminder gently reminds them how to behave in certain circumstances, for example when a toddler throws a toy, the childminder quietly speaks to her so that she responds appropriately. Children develop self-esteem because the childminder takes every opportunity to positively reinforce their actions and praises them whenever possible.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a clear sense of purpose and shows that she is committed to continual improvement by studying the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters frameworks. She uses these to develop plans so that children increase their abilities in all areas of learning. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge, experience, and qualification gained when working at a local pre-school. Children's achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting is enhanced by the childminder who ensures that the layout is suitable for young children, for instance she puts a specific table in the playroom for children to use when eating or colouring.

The childminder uses her policies to work with parents to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution. She has a number of policies which work well although she does not have procedures in place to inform parents how to make a complaint. Children's needs are met well by the childminder who ensures that her records are complete and neatly filed. She is aware of the importance of confidentiality and keeps all documentation in a safe and secure place.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that the times of accidents are recorded; this she now does so that she keeps parents informed in order to maintain the welfare of children. She was also asked to make sure that children's attendance was recorded every day; the childminder has now changed the method of recording when children come and uses sheets which she ticks each day so that she keeps daily records of children's attendance. The childminder was also asked to ensure that the names of people living on the premises are recorded. She now keeps a visitors' book where she puts the names of any visitors who are not checked, so that children are safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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:

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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 all toys are checked for cleanliness after use
- risk assess the garden to ensure that all hazards are addressed.

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