



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125616
Inspection date	24 July 2006
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
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 satisfactory. 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 1999. She lives with her husband and four children ages 13, nine, four and two years in Whitstable, Kent. She is currently minding three children under eight on a rota basis. The whole of the ground floor the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder attends local toddler groups and walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children.

The family has a dog and a cat.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has recently completed a National Vocational Qualification, level III, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean home where toys and equipment are clean. They learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine; for example, they wash their hands before they eat and after using the toilet. However, this is not done consistently, as at times the childminder gives children wipes to wipe their hands rather than ask them to wash them at the sink. This means that children are not learning about the importance of appropriate hand washing at all times. When they wash their hands at the sink they have liquid soap and individual towels. This means they do not share towels to help prevent the spread of infection. There is a sick child policy, updated first aid training and accident and medicine records to help the childminder act in the best interest of children if they have an accident or become ill.

Physical play is a regular activity, in addition, children walk to the local school most days. Young children develop control of their bodies as they enjoy physical activities; such as rolling and throwing balls. Children enjoy garden play in fine weather or a visit to the local park. Garden toys are available; however, children's access to the garden is currently limited as there is some work to do to improve it. Young children enjoy outings such as toddler groups and visits to local places of interest. These activities contribute to their physical well being.

The childminder or parents provide the food. Packed lunches are stored appropriately in the fridge to keep them fresh. However, the childminder has not developed a healthy eating policy and the menus do not always include healthy options to ensure children remain well nourished. Children are provided with plenty of drinks throughout the day to keep them hydrated. Younger children have their own cups that are filled with drink and easily accessible to them. Older children can help themselves. Children's individual meal and rest times are respected by the childminder. Consequently, children are able to eat and sleep when they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder undertakes a monthly risk assessment, she documents risks and the actions taken. She has safety measures in place; for example, stair gates, cupboard locks, plug covers, and a toilet lock that opens from either side. As a result, her home is safe and secure for the children cared for. However, there is work to be done in the garden to make it appropriate for the children's use. The childminder has put a plan in place to account for this to keep children safe. Toys are safe, clean and well maintained, enabling children to play safely. The childminder safeguards and promotes the children's welfare; for example, there are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. The childminder knows the recommendations for sleeping babies so they are put down to sleep appropriately. She has a sound knowledge of child protection and knows what to do should she have concerns about a child. In addition, a record of existing injuries is kept to show any patterns which may lead to concerns. There is an evacuation plan, smoke alarms and a fire blanket to contribute to the children's safety in a fire. The childminder teaches children about safety and has practiced evacuation with the children. However, she does not keep a written record. The childminder has parental permission

for transporting children in a vehicle and for outings. All children's emergency numbers are taken on outings so parents can be reached quickly in an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mostly happy and content in the childminder's care. There is a variety of toys and equipment for them to select from, this helps to promote their independence. Children's social development is promoted as they are encouraged to take turns, share and play together; for example, when they made camps from blankets and rolled the ball to the childminder and each other. Children enjoy role play, they use their imagination as they care for the dolls and do the washing. The childminder has multiples of popular toys, such as pushchairs and telephones, so the younger children do not have to wait for a turn. Children's emotional development is fostered as they readily approach the childminder and sit on her lap for a cuddle. Their mathematical thinking is promoted when they complete puzzles and the childminder counts with them as they play. The children's language development is fostered as they talk on the telephones, sing songs and look at books with the childminder. In addition, she talks to them about what they are doing to further enhance this. However, not all activities are developmentally appropriate; for example, many activities are adult directed, work sheet activities. As a result, children's creativity is not being fostered appropriately. The childminder has attended Birth to three matters training. She has begun planning around a theme; however, this has not yet been fully developed to ensure the Birth to three matters framework is taken into account to promote positive outcomes for the younger children. The childminder appreciates the differences in the ages and stages of development and said that the older children enjoy board games, such as Monopoly and Boggle. They enjoy outside play and have planted and grown plants. Older children are role models to the younger children and like to help and play with them; for example, they enjoy playing games such as hide and seek together.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a settling in procedure that begins with short visits, as a result children are settled in her care. They enjoy her company and readily approach her to play. Positive behaviour is encouraged with lots of praise; although the childminder's use of 'time out' does not always promote the children's self esteem. The children learn to play co-operatively and share as the childminder regularly talks to them about helping each other and taking turns. The children's record forms detail religion and any special requirements to enable the childminder to cater for their individual needs. Children learn about the local community as they visit places of interest; for example, Farming World. There are resources that reflect positive images of different cultures to help children develop knowledge and understanding of the world. The childminder is a positive role model, she promotes an understanding of differences as she talks to the children about why some people need wheelchairs, crutches or glasses.

The childminder talks to the parents daily to keep them informed. This promotes continuity of care. She puts together scrap books of the children's work and photograph albums of the children participating in activities. These are shared with the parents and given to them when

their children leave, serving as a record of their time with her. There are a range of policies to inform parents of the childminder's service. In addition, parent's written permission has been sought for outings, transporting children in a vehicle, applying creams and to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Contracts are in place outlining business details to ensure that the childminder is providing the care parents wish. There is a complaints policy that includes Ofsted details. The childminder has received the amendment to the standards and is aware of the requirement to keep a log of complaints. She requests that parents undertake an annual survey to help her improve her practice. These surveys are very positive and parents are pleased with the care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She makes good use of space, as a result children can move freely and safely in her home. Children feel at home and are confident to play. The daily routine is organised to include quiet times, active times, meal times and outings. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children are maintained and stored securely. The attendance register shows that the childminder complies with her conditions of numbers. She is aware that the care of children over eight must not affect the care of children under eight and is able to describe how she manages this. The childminder has produced a range of policies that she shares with parents; however, the certificate of registration is not being displayed for parents to see. She is aware that she must inform Ofsted of significant events and there is evidence that she informed Ofsted of the recent work in her home. The childminder has all of the paperwork organised including public liability and business insurance on her car. She is committed to developing her knowledge and understanding of child development and has undertaken several short courses and recently completed a National Vocational Qualification level III in Early Childhood Care and Education. The courses and qualifications undertaken enhance the care she provides for the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

After the last inspection there were four recommendations made. They were to ensure that toys and equipment are clean, well maintained and safe, keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children, keep an accurate record of attendance and to ensure checks are in place for all persons residing on the premises above the age of 16 years.

The childminder has a system in place to ensure that toys and equipment remain clean, well maintained and safe. As a result, children's health and safety is protected. She keeps a written record, signed by parents, of all medicines given to children and an accurate record of the children's attendance. These documents are to ensure safe management of the provision and promote the children's welfare. New forms have been submitted for updated checks which will show that all persons residing on the premises above the age of 16 years are suitable to be around children.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received by Ofsted that the provider was not in compliance with her conditions of registration. She was asked to investigate and report back to Ofsted. The provider reported back with full details of her registration. It was found that there was no breach of her conditions and she remains qualified for registration.

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):

- develop a healthy eating policy which will help children learn about making healthy choices
- continue to develop the use of Birth to three matters when planning activities for the younger children and promote all children's creativity by providing opportunities for them to explore different mediums
- ensure inappropriate behaviour is always managed positively.

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