



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126215
Inspection date	13 July 2006
Inspector	Melissa Tickner
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 1993. She lives with her adult daughter in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. The whole ground floor and part of the first floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children under five on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The childminder has a dog.

The childminder is a member of National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a very strong awareness of being healthy. They are encouraged to wash their hands before lunch using their 'squirty soap' and dry them on their own hand towels which hang on their own labelled pegs. They clean their teeth after meals and the childminder adopts positive routines to promote good hygiene. For example, antibacterial spray is used to wipe down surfaces used by children and effective methods are in place for nappy changing, such as use of disposable gloves. These aspects help avoid the spread of infection and encourage strong practices with children. They eat healthy foods provided by the childminder. She prepares and freezes cubes of healthy meals for young children which are defrosted as they are needed. She has also worked with parents to promote healthy eating through recommending the use of a 'baby safe feeder' which allows babies to suck safely on fresh and dried fruit pieces. Older children enjoy cold lunches such as bread and cheese, with a range of vegetables and salad, such as lettuce, carrots, and tomatoes. The childminder works sensitively with children that may be 'fussy' eaters and reintroduces and offers foods frequently. As a result of these aspects children are well nourished and developing good eating habits during their time with the childminder. Children are regularly offered sips of water and younger children are encouraged to hold their cups and sip cooled boiled water. This helps ensure all children stay hydrated.

Children thoroughly enjoy a very good range of physical outdoor play activities. For example, during the inspection they delight in using an extensive range of outdoor play resources, such as the slide, trampoline, ball pool and tunnel and football and goals. They practise skills such as crawling, jumping, running and kicking, thus promoting enjoyment of physical exercise. Children also use equipment such as hoops, bean bags and 'egg and spoon' to help develop skills such as co-ordination and balancing. Consequently children's physical development is strong and an area that is promoted and encouraged by the childminder well. All relevant medical and health documentation is in place and the childminder has a valid first aid certificate. These aspects ensure she is suitably equipped to deal with an emergency, accidents or illnesses.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed in to an inviting and child orientated home. They have use of their own dedicated playroom and an additional messy and arts and crafts play area, as well as other safe areas of the house, which are organised to meet their needs. Children delight as they confidently enter these rooms, which enable them to make good choices and play in a safe and stimulating environment. The children's playroom is decorated with their work, organised to promote independent access to many of their resources and they enjoy looking at their photos and displays of their work. This includes, for example, a snake they have made which is strung across the ceiling, and giraffes from egg boxes. Information is also displayed for parents, such as Birth to three matters information and the Ofsted parent's poster. The garden has also been organised specifically for children; with a good range of well spaced outdoor play resources and a gazebo set up to provide shade during hotter weather and a play area for sand and water play.

Children are cared for in a safe home environment, they are supervised well and their safety is promoted in practice. For example, the childminder uses monitors for sleeping babies, ensures children are strapped in to their high chairs and supervises them in their play at all times. Appropriate measures are in place to keep children safe outdoors and when on outings; including the use of wrist tags to help keep children safe. The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should she develop concerns. This is supported by a clear child protection policy. As a result, children's welfare and well-being is promoted by the childminder at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves in the childminders care. They show enthusiasm and confidence as they choose from a wide range of resources and activities which are geared to their age. For example, during the inspection children enjoy playing with the train set, which is supported by the childminder, chatting about the train journey and where it is going. The childminder plans activities in line with children's interests and the seasons. For example, a child in the childminder's care recently had a trip to the beach. This prompted an activity relating to the seaside, they have made sand pictures, read related stories and discussed this aspect together. For example, the child enjoys pointing out pictures on his jigsaw with words he has learnt such as shells, starfish and snorkel.

Children enjoy exploring the play dough and are provided with a good range of tools to support them. The childminder supports this activity offering good demonstrations and explanations, encouraging children to learn new skills and to explore. The childminder is able to pitch activities to meet the varying ages and needs of children and during the inspection younger children are valued and included as they are offered a range of toys suited to their age, and supportive and caring interaction. The childminder has started to incorporate the Birth to three matters framework in line with other supporting documentation she is already using. This is enabling her to chart children's progress and development in her care. Children are offered plenty of encouragement during their play. They are supported as they chat about what they are doing. This helps ensure they feel valued and secure. All of these aspects help contribute to children enjoying and achieving and making progress whilst in the childminder's care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder treats children with equal concern and is caring and considerate to their needs. She encourages children throughout their activities and helps them to feel valued and important. The childminder recognises and values the children's home lives. For example; they talk about a new baby that is expected by the parents of a child in her care. Consequently, children feel settled and secure in her care. There is a good range of resources promoting diversity, which are well incorporated within all the toys and resources. This helps to promote and teach children about the diversity of our society. The childminder has a consistent and positive approach to managing children's behaviour. She uses encouragement and reassurance constantly with children and regular use of praise helps them to feel settled and encouraged to behave well.

Sticker charts are used for achievements such as potty training and eating well. The childminder has a calm and caring manner and explains rules and offers children explanations. As a result of these aspects, children are learning about good behaviour, and this helps contribute to building their self-esteem and confidence.

There are effective systems to work with parents. They are worked with closely and communicated with daily. Detailed journals of the children's care and daily activities are kept, and the childminder works with parents, supporting them on any issues. This is supported by a range of positive cards and letters from parents. Parents are provided with a good range of information such as a detailed range of policies and further reading. These aspects help ensure children's needs can be met and parents are able to receive a full range of information about their children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder's extremely organised approach to her childminding enables her to promote strong outcomes for children. She has a wealth of documentation which is well organised and stored appropriately. All mandatory and other required paperwork is in place, as well as a good range of further information and resources to support the childminder in her work. The required complaints log is in place; however the 'concerns' policy does not currently make reference to it. Parents are provided with a good range of information including a detailed and thorough set of policies. The childminder works from a well organised home, which provides dedicated spaces for children to play which are extremely welcoming and child orientated. The childminder has nursery nursing qualifications and is committed to updating her strong knowledge and understanding of child development, through attending short training and refresher courses where possible. She also has systems in place to make changes and improvements in the care and service she offers; in the form of a 'good practice book'. Here the childminder records and monitors areas for development and ideas for themes and topics as well as using it as a way of monitoring health and safety aspects around the home. These aspects identify the childminder's commitment to improve and develop and to continue to promote strong outcomes for children. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in April 2003, the childminder was asked to write a formal risk assessment procedure. This has now been implemented and the childminder risk assesses her home regularly to ensure she provides a safe environment for children to play.

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:

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 the concerns policy makes reference to the complaints log that is required by law

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