



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285524
Inspection date	31 October 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 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 2004. She lives with her partner and three children aged ten, seven and five in Whitstable, Kent. The whole of the ground 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 four children at any one time and is currently minding eight children on a part time basis.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler groups.

The family has a dog and tropical fish.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the toys and equipment are clean. There are effective hygiene procedures to reduce cross infection; for example, the childminder wears gloves for changing the children and sanitises the changing mat after use. Children learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine; for example, they are reminded to cover their coughs and they know to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before meals. There is liquid soap and paper towels for hand-washing and drying to help prevent the spread of infection. A sick child policy, first aid training and accident and medicine records are in place. These help the childminder to act in the children's best interest should they have an accident or become ill. First aid kits are readily accessible for dealing with minor accidents. Parental permission to seek emergency medical advice and treatment is available for all children to enable the childminder to seek appropriate advice or get treatment for any serious accidents.

Parents provide the food for their children and the childminder provides fruit for their snack. She works closely with the parents and together they ensure the children remain well nourished. Children help to prepare for snack; for example, they lay the table and the childminder hides the fruit so that the children can look for it. This gives them the opportunity to talk about the fruit. Children enjoy trying different fruit such as, blueberries and kiwi. Children have their own cups that are filled with water and easily accessible to them; however, at times cups are shared by the children. Children's individual rest times are respected by the childminder. This means children are able to sleep when they wish.

Physical play is a regular activity and the children go outside daily. Garden toys are available, such as slides, hoppers and a trampoline. Children practise their skills as they climb up the slide and whiz down again. They delight in visiting the windmills around the garden and watching them spin in the wind or finding the insects in a tub of 'goop'. Children enjoy visiting local parks and going on walks to take and collect the older children from school. These activities contribute to the children's physical wellbeing. In addition, topics such as exercise and making healthy choices helps the children to learn about keeping themselves healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure for the children being cared for. The childminder risk assesses continuously and undertakes regular written risk assessments. All areas of the home are assessed for hazards and the outcome documented. The childminder promotes an awareness of safety as she is a positive role-model; for example, children are reminded about safety when they play and when they practise fire evacuation. As a result, children are learning about keeping safe. The childminder safeguards and promotes the children's welfare. There are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. The childminder has a good knowledge of the current recommendations for laying babies down to sleep which contributes to keeping them safe. In addition, she has a sound knowledge of child protection which means she can act in the children's best interest should she have concerns. There is an evacuation plan, smoke alarms

and fire blanket to contribute to children's safety should there be a fire. The childminder has parental permission for transporting children in a vehicle and for taking them on outings. The childminder undertakes risk assessments prior to visiting new places to ensure the children's safety. All children's emergency numbers are taken on outings along with a first aid kit and the childminder ensures the children wear identity bracelets detailing her mobile number. In addition, there is a lost child procedure in place. These procedures ensure children are safe outside the childminder's home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy in the childminder's care. They have a sense of belonging as their photographs are posted on the parent board ready for when they arrive. In addition, they have a space to put their belongings. They become excited when look at the photographs and see who else is coming for the day. As a result, they are building close relationships with each other. Routines such as snack time encourages their social development as they sit together and select what they would like to eat. The childminder engages them in lively conversations and talks to them about the food they are choosing. Children are becoming skilful communicators as they childminder uses good questioning skills and repeats the children's responses, modelling good language. There is a variety of toys and equipment all housed on low shelves in clear boxes and labelled. This means the children's independence is promoted as they can easily select what they wish to play with and are beginning to learn that print carries meaning. Children have a range of toys and equipment to play with. There is a balance between manufactured and natural objects. Children clearly enjoy experimenting and exploring natural objects as they use their senses to find out about whatever they come into contact with. They play happily with coloured kitchen sponges, building with them and hiding them by squeezing them into little boxes, using their small muscles. In addition, children have fun playing with items such as cardboard tubes and exploring real vegetables; such as, marrows. These hands on experiences help them to become competent learners.

Mirrors situated in the hallway and the play room allow children to gain a sense of self as they look at themselves saying their own names. Displayed art work shows children are able to be creative and they are proud as they point out their pictures. However, some of the activities are adult directed, although children are able to continue to explore with the art medium used in any way they please. A range of shop bough and home made instruments are available for children be creative with; for example, one child delighted in the noise he made as he banged a tin drum. Children look at books independently developing a love of books, they are observed babbling as they read their own stories and become engaged in the pictures. The childminder supports them and they enjoy stories together. Children mathematical thinking is promoted as the childminder involves them in activities such as cooking when they weigh and measure. In addition, she uses mathematical language as they play; such as, under and inside; for example, as they looked for the bugs in the 'goop'. The childminder plans for the children in her care. Her plans are based around a topic but flexible as the children's interests change. She uses the Birth to three matters framework and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Observations are accomplished on the children and the childminder is beginning to use the observations to plan for the children's next steps. In addition, she evaluates her activities each

week to see where they fit in the framework or the six areas of learning. However, the evaluation does not yet include how successful the activities were and what she would do differently in future.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have developed close and secure relationships with the childminder. They enjoy her company and readily approach her to play. Children are treated with respect and valued as individuals and the childminder listens to them and asks their opinion about things. The childminder has a settling in procedure that includes short visits with, then without their parents. As a result, children are settled in the childminder's care. The childminder has set boundaries the children understand. Positive behaviour is promoted through praise and encouragement which promotes the children's self esteem. The childminder passionately believes lots of positive praise brings out the best in the children and she ignores any inappropriate behaviour using distraction if needed. As a result, children are well behaved in her care. Through the childminder's positive role modelling children are learning to take turns, play co-operatively and share.

Children learn about the local community as they go on visits to the beach, shops and to collect leaves and stones. There are a range of resources that reflect positive images of different cultures to help children develop knowledge and understanding of the world. In addition, the childminder borrows resources from her local childminding group to enhance her resources. Festivals and holidays from the children's own and other cultures are acknowledged through a range of activities. Children's record forms detail religion and any special requirements to enable the childminder to cater for their individual needs. The childminder welcomes all children into her care and their personal cultures are acknowledged.

The childminder finds out about children's routines by working closely with the parents. She talks to them daily to keep them informed and to find out about anything she needs to know to provide appropriate care. The childminder provides parents with a contact book, where she shares the children's accomplishments and illustrates them with photographic evidence. In addition, a parent board contains any new and current information; for example, how to contact Ofsted and the current newsletter. The childminder has informed parents of her inspection. As a result, parents provided letters for the inspector stating how happy they were with the childminder's excellent care, dedication and professionalism. In addition, a telephone compliment is logged with Ofsted. There are policies that inform parents of the childminder's service and the childminder has a range of written permissions from the parents. There is a complaints policy and log for parent review. The childminder has recently developed a comprehensive survey for parents to help her improve her service.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The children feel at ease in the well organised environment. The daily routine is organised to include quiet times, active times, meal times and outings and the children are able to move freely and safely

in the childminder's home. All of the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children is maintained and stored securely. An attendance record is available and the childminder keeps a overview so at a glance she can ensure her numbers are always in line with her conditions of registration. The childminder reviews the care she provides using a range of tools; for example, the self-evaluation form, Every Child Matters, Birth to three matters, the Foundation Stage and the National Standards. She has a working file for each and reviews them regularly making notes to improve her practice. She has enrolled on the Ofsted web site so she receives all new information. She also subscribes to Nursery World and Practical Childcare magazines. As a result, she makes changes as needed and is informed and up to date of issues concerning the care of children. All adults living on the premises including the childminder have current checks so are suitable to be around children. In addition, the childminder records all visitors to the property. Her paperwork is excellent and well organised. Her certificate of registration is posted for the parents to see. The childminder is committed to professional development and attends short courses as they become available. In addition, she has recently enrolled in a course to gain a Diploma in Home Based Childcare, Level 3. Her attention to detail, enthusiasm for providing children with quality care and her drive to improve her practice means that children will continue to benefit from the excellent care she offers.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there was one recommendation made to improve the childminder's service. This was to ensure emergency procedures are fully incorporated into practice. Since the last inspection the childminder has ensured that her families are fully aware of who to contact should they be unable to reach her. This information is provided with other safety information which show parents that emergency procedures are in place for their children's safety.

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:

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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):

- continue to develop the use of observation and the evaluation of activities to ensure children's needs are being met.

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