



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126187
Inspection date	03 October 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 1994.

She lives with her three children aged seven, 10 and 12 in Pembury, Kent. The whole 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 six children at any one time and is currently minding one child all day, and four before and after school. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has three guinea pigs.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. She belongs to the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to understand good health practices and adopt hygienic routines, helped by the childminder who ensures that they always wash their hands following a visit to the toilet, and before eating. The childminder provides separate, clean towels for children in order to prevent the transmission of germs, and a footstool to help children manage their own ablutions. The childminder contributes to children's good health by putting her knowledge gained on a 'food hygiene and home safety' course, into practice. Children are protected from infection because the childminder always wipes surfaces with anti-bacterial cleanser; she also ensures that sick children do not attend. Children take part in regular physical activity when they walk to and from school with the childminder; they also frequently exercise when playing on the slide and tricycles at the toddler group or in the park, plus they enjoy kicking a ball in the garden. Young children sleep comfortably in a travel cot when they are tired, which is placed in the little-used sitting room. Older children curl up contentedly on a sofa in the playroom.

Although the childminder provides a suitable menu for parents, she also encourages children to choose what they wish to eat and sometimes invites them to decide what type of fruit they would like as snacks. Children easily help themselves to a drink of water whenever they are thirsty. They are well nourished because the childminder produces nutritional meals and cooks fresh vegetables both at lunchtime and for dinner.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder carefully implements her policies and procedures to ensure that all children are cared for in secure, welcoming, child-friendly and clean premises where she uses a number of strategies to ensure their safety. For example she erects a gate to prevent children hurting themselves on the stairs and puts in socket covers to ensure they do not electrocute themselves. In the kitchen the childminder takes a number of precautions to prevent accidents, for example she ensures that cupboards containing dangerous substances are locked to prevent children reaching them.

Children use suitable equipment which is age-appropriate and well-maintained, for example they sit at a child-sized table and chairs and have the use of travel cots, pushchairs, and a highchair. The childminder ensures that the kiddie-seats in the car are the correct size and right for the purpose, in accordance with recent legislation, so that children are protected. Children easily help themselves to toys from the large range distributed throughout the playroom. They are helped to avoid accidental injury by the childminder who ensures that her fire precautions, such as smoke alarms, are in good condition and working well.

Children's welfare is extremely well maintained by the childminder who has a well-written child protection policy and also has a good knowledge of how to safeguard children. The childminder is familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and is aware of whom to contact if she has concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children very quickly settle and seek out their own activities from a large range easily accessed in the playroom. Young children are beginning to talk and speak clearly whilst showing an awareness of the listener; they understand the need to wait for a response. The childminder's interaction with children is outstanding. She communicates with them clearly and extends their learning in a variety of ways. For example when a two year old is playing with cars she crawls on the road mat with him, talking about the purpose of different vehicles, such as an ambulance, and the sounds that they make. Young children become very involved in their play and invent imaginative games for long periods of time, but all the time the childminder is aware of their activities and frequently joins in to discuss various aspects which help to extend their learning.

Children enjoy investigating the properties of materials such as playdough. They have their learning enhanced by the childminder who stimulates them further by asking appropriate questions to stretch their imaginations and increase their knowledge. Children are using speech to organise and explore real and imagined ideas and feelings. The childminder helps them consolidate their experiences by gently reminding them of correct names for things such as colour. She raises their self-esteem by praising and encouraging them as often as possible. Children are becoming increasingly confident to make decisions because the childminder allows them to experiment by themselves, sensitively helping them when appropriate. For example the childminder helps a two year old to make shapes by using the playdough tools and then leaves him to play with his chosen animal shape by himself. He appreciates her input and delights in pursuing his own interests for long periods of time. Children's ability is fostered by the childminder who is generous in complimenting them when they achieve small accomplishments. Children are also beginning to dress themselves because the childminder puts hooks at child height so that they can reach their clothes independently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to understand and celebrate the diversities within our society because the childminder introduces a number of appropriate toys such as dressing up clothes. Children are valued, respected and included in all activities, as the childminder puts her equal opportunities policy into practice. All children have their individual needs met by the childminder who encourages everyone to join in all activities irrespective of their ability. For example, when children are undertaking craft work, the youngest child helps by putting on the glue.

The childminder works closely with parents in order to ensure that children have their specific needs met. She reviews information sheets every six months so that she is completely knowledgeable about their health, and is familiar with children's current requirements. The childminder also seeks advice from literature and the internet so that she is able to promote children's development by giving all children the best care possible. Parents are pleased with the activities which the childminder arranges for their children and the fact that she communicates clearly with them by using a day book. Children are secure because the childminder works closely with parents to enhance their continuity of care. The childminder often praises children during play and as a result children's self-esteem is raised and they are quickly learning

to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour. The childminder also uses other methods of behaviour management, such as distraction, so that children are encouraged to play together and learn to share toys. All children are beginning to work harmoniously with each other because of the childminder's sensible approach.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's security, enjoyment and development is constantly improving because the childminder has a very clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. She accesses as many courses as possible in order to improve on her skills and ability to help all children reach their potential. Children are protected and cared for by the childminder who has a good knowledge and understanding of child development. She organises the setting so that children's health, safety, achievement, and ability to make a positive contribution are all enhanced and works with parents to promote children's continuity of care. The childminder keeps all her documentation neatly filed so that records are clear and easily used. Although one of the childminder's written policies is out of date, children's welfare is sufficiently well guarded to enable them to thrive in the setting.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to change children's nappies on the floor using anti-bacterial spray. This she now does. She also ensures that all children have separate record forms, as requested at the last inspection.

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 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 that all policies and procedures are up to date

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