



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	160776
Inspection date	22 November 2006
Inspector	Beryl Witheridge
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two school aged children in Twydall, Gillingham, 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 four children at any one time and is currently minding four children. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group and childminding groups.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's well-being is promoted through the clean and healthy environment provided for them. They are introduced to good hygiene practices and know when and how to wash their hands. The children are playing together and the childminder asks, 'what do we do before we have lunch?' the children easily respond, 'wash our hands'. The minded children have their own towel which is washed on a daily basis. Children benefit from effective hygiene practices where they learn about good health routines; one child carries a hanky in her pocket and wipes her nose without having to be reminded. Children's good health is monitored through the effective written records which log accidents and any medication given to the children. There is written parental permission for seeking medical advice and treatment. Children are protected from the spread of infection because antibacterial spray is used for surfaces and worktops to ensure that the home is clean and safe. Children who have an infectious disease will not be cared for. If they are taken ill while with the childminder, the parents are contacted and asked to collect them.

Children take part in lots of physical activities which help to promote their physical development; they have access to a secure garden, they go swimming and go for lots of walks. One child recently managed to swim two lengths of the pool and was very proud of herself.

Children are provided with fresh drinking water, squash and milk throughout the day. Their individual dietary requirements are respected and any allergies or specific details are recorded on the children's information sheets. Children enjoy and talk about their favourite foods, such as spaghetti bolognese or pizza. Children are able to make healthy choices regarding the food they eat. They enjoy fresh foods including raw vegetables, such as peppers, carrots and cucumber, and like fruit. Instead of sandwiches they like pitta bread with pate. They also take part in simple cookery and have biscuits which they have previously decorated, one for themselves and another one to take home for their family.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from having their own space to access play opportunities. The home is organised to give them space to play, learn and have fun. They have access to the whole of the downstairs. They have plenty room to move around and to extend their play, they use their imaginations and play well together. Their enjoyment is promoted through the freely accessible toys and equipment.

Children have access to toys which are checked regularly for hygiene and safety, any broken equipment is thrown away. Toys are cleaned termly and more often if it is needed. They all conform to safety standards. The furniture and equipment provides a stimulating environment with lots of pictures, posters and things of interest on the walls. The children have all their toys and equipment accessible in their own cupboards which they can help themselves to as and when they want, the only stipulation is that they must clear up one lot of toys before getting

out the next which they do willingly and happily. Toys are rotated to give the children more choices and to stop them from becoming bored or disinterested.

Children understand the importance of keeping themselves safe because of the positive steps taken by the childminder. They understand the house rules because the childminder talks to them at all times and explains why certain procedures are necessary, such as sitting at the table when they are drinking so that they don't spill it. Children's safety is promoted through the well rehearsed and discussed procedures for the emergency evacuation. All children know what to do in an emergency and are currently learning the address and phone number, they know who to go to if anything should happen to the childminder. When in the car all children are transported in the correct car seats which are supplied by the childminder, parents of babies are asked to provide their own. Children know the rules and the expectations of them when they are out of the house; they understand the importance of doing as they are asked and of walking safely with the childminder. There is written parental permission for taking children on trips and children all wear arm bands, which are produced by the National Childminding Association (NCMA). Appropriate equipment, such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms, helps reduce risk of serious accidents.

The welfare of children is promoted through the childminder's positive attitude towards their well-being. She has recently undertaken safeguarding children training and has a written policy which complies with the local safeguarding children board (LSCB). She knows how to put procedures in place by recording existing injuries and concerns, she has a good knowledge of keeping herself and the children safe, she knows who to contact to make referrals and is aware of the procedure to be followed in event of allegations against herself or a member of her family.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a home from home environment, they are very at ease, comfortable and relaxed and have a close relationship with the childminder. Children enjoy social opportunities, where they mix with other childminders and their children or when they take part in their swimming activities. Children's individual needs and welfare are promoted because the childminder is very close to them, she talks to them and plays with them constantly but knows when to step back and let them take the lead. They enjoy and achieve during their time because they are able to explore ideas, extend their knowledge, learn new skills and have fun. Children show high level of well-being and involvement as they use their imaginations while taking part in role play. Children's learning is extended by discussions with the childminder and through books which help to provide answers to their questions and which encourage them to look further and ask more questions. They have a great thirst for knowledge about the world about them. They talk about pets and why some people are afraid of different types of animals. All these questions were answered sympathetically, carefully and honestly by the childminder. Children confidently choose from a range of freely accessible toys and resources, they look at different countries and are able to identify some of these on the map. They talk about the different types of homes people live in around the world and the clothes and food these people have. Children are provided with warmth and care in loving and comfortable surroundings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a very positive attitude about equal opportunities and understands that all children are individuals and all have their own specific needs. All children are able to partake in the same activities although some may need to be adapted to meet their own specific needs. The childminder discusses the needs of each child with the parents when they first come. There is a two week settling in period to learn about the child, family and any individual needs. Children learn about different festivals and celebrations throughout the year which encourages them to take an interest in other people and their cultures. Children have access to a good supply of toys and equipment which provide positive images of diversity. Children have access to fridge magnet letters which are also in Braille. Other toys and equipment can be obtained from other sources, such as other childminders who work together and pool resources.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) would be welcomed wherever possible. Appropriate action to meet the needs of any child would be discussed with parents before taking a child on. She is willing to work closely with parents and outside agencies to help meet the needs of any child she cares for. The childminder has some experience of caring for a child with special needs. The minded children mix with a lot of other children and regularly come into contact with people who have disabilities. Children are able to talk about any issues or concerns they may have with the childminder.

Children understand the expected behavioural boundaries set by the childminder, when one child is speaking another one interrupts her, the childminder asks, 'do we speak when someone else is talking?' 'No we don't interrupt; we have to listen' replies the other child. A child puts the last piece of biscuit in her mouth and then speaks, the other child reminds her, 'you don't talk with your mouth full'. The childminder is an excellent role model and manages children's behaviour in a very positive way that promotes their welfare and development. She encourages and praises at all times and talks through all aspects of their play and behaviour. Children also do this to each other, when playing one child will congratulate the other for good work, telling them, 'you did that really well' or 'that's really good'. To encourage good behaviour children receive stickers and at the end of the week they are able to have a treat. Strategies used for unacceptable behaviour are talking to the children, giving an explanation about what is acceptable and what is not, if necessary removing from the situation and expecting children to apologise to each other. The childminder believes 'Children are happier when they have boundaries'. Any concerns are discussed with the parents and they deal with unacceptable behaviour in the same way. There is a written policy which is shared with the parents.

Children benefit from consistency of care because all aspects of care are discussed with the parents, there is a two week settling in period before a child is taken on permanently to ensure that the parent, the child and the childminder are comfortable with the arrangement. Parents are able to share the effective written policies and procedures. Parents discuss their child's day and any other issues, at the beginning and end of each day, with the childminder. There are many thank you cards and letters from grateful parents and children and the childminder has become good friends with several of her parents. The record of complaints is available to be shared with parents. The written complaints policy is in place but requires updating so that parents are receiving the correct information. Children's welfare is promoted by effective child

information records which record all the relevant details of the children, these are up to date and provide an historic record of each child cared for.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is very proactive about her training and knowledge. She has attended the required childminding and First Aid course and has continued to improve her knowledge and understanding of childcare. She is a member of the NCMA but is not accredited. The effective policies and procedures help to promote the children's welfare, care, safety and learning. The childminder continually risk assesses and supervises children at all times.

Children benefit from plenty of space to move around and freely access the toys and resources on offer, all of which are developmentally appropriate and meet the needs of the children attending. The record of attendance is up to date and shows clear arrival and departure times. It also records when and why a child is not present. The childminder has contacted Ofsted regarding a temporary variation of her registration, this was fully discussed and the variation has been agreed. The provider agreed with the conditions explained to her at the time of the inspection.

All the required documentation and more are readily available for inspection. All information is confidentially kept and is safely stored. The childminder has a good understanding of the records and procedures required to provide a safe, secure, stimulating and enjoyable environment for the children and to provide parents and carers with quality information in her written policies and procedures about the care provided. The registration certificate is clearly displayed on the notice board.

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 her First Aid kit was accessible and also to produce a written policy on lost and uncollected children. Both these issues have been satisfactorily addressed.

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

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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):

- up date the written complaints policy to include the address and new phone number of Ofsted

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