



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103292
Inspection date	01 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott
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 has been registered since 1993. She lives in a house situated in Hempstead, near Gillingham, Kent, with a teenage child. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding as well as one room upstairs for sleeping. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play.

She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years; of these, not more than three may be under five years, and of these, not more than one may be under one year. Overnight care for up to two children can be provided. There are six children who attend on a part time basis and four of these are under eight.

The childminder takes children to a local pre-school group and schools on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder promotes the health of children successfully through good hygiene practices. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene routines such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet and using wipes after eating messy food. Their individual routines for sleeping and personal care are respected by the childminder who ensures these are catered for.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and is therefore able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident. She is prepared to seek emergency treatment if needed, using written consent which parents have provided. This ensures appropriate treatment for children in an emergency.

The children receive regular food and drinks which parents can supply if they wish. The childminder is happy to supply freshly prepared meals such as roasts, balanced with some popular foods occasionally. These comply with children's dietary needs so that they are well nourished and healthy. Children are encouraged to eat a variety of foods, such as lamb stew and often sit together to do so, promoting good social opportunities and conversations with each other.

The childminder stores food safely and ensures children are not exposed to any risks by using good food hygiene procedures such as avoiding cross contamination of foods. The children are provided with snacks that are healthy such as fruits, and help themselves or request a drink whenever they need one; this helps them develop healthy eating habits.

Children enjoy a good balance of energetic activity with times for quiet play and rest in a safe environment. They experience daily physical exercise when they walk to school, or to the park where they can play on the apparatus such as the roundabout. This helps them understand the need for regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to feel very settled and secure through the good organisation and use of space. This results in children who feel relaxed and confident in the childminder's care. They benefit from being able to move around safely and independently as the childminder supervises them effectively.

Children benefit from an attractive, good range of safe and suitable resources and equipment, including car seats, a highchair, and a playpen. Children are able to independently access an interesting range of age appropriate toys which are varied to ensure their interest is stimulated.

Children are kept safe in the home and enjoy their play in a safe environment. Most of the necessary steps have been taken to minimise risks, such as replacing fence panels in the garden which had blown down. However, a large bag of toys is made of plastic and could represent a

danger to children. Children benefit from the safety measures such as the smoke alarms and fire blanket which are sited appropriately.

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has an understanding of child protection procedures and sources of advice, therefore protecting their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy playing in the garden on a regular basis. They develop their physical skills by walking to the local school and extend their social skills by visiting local parks and play areas where they can play with other children.

Children successfully develop their confidence through chatting and playing with each other and the childminder. They are happy and relaxed because the childminder is warm and affectionate, for instance, they are encouraged to talk about their play and share their ideas. The childminder supports children very well during their play, developing their confidence to explore the toys and games provided. This encourages secure relationships to be built.

Children enjoy playing with the varied toys and resources. They independently make choices about the activities they become involved in. For example, older children have made cards for mother's day and Easter, writing messages in these with help from the childminder. The childminder reads to children and encourages them to learn new skills by playing word association games which develop their vocabulary, reading and thinking skills. Children enjoy their play owing to the good support and positive encouragement of the childminder who understands their developmental needs well.

Children are interested in playing with the varied toys and resources as the childminder encourages their skills through recognition of their abilities and praise for their achievements. For instance, the childminder discusses the skill of one child when colouring and this successfully nurtures the child's self esteem and sense of pride. Children build on their learning because of the participation and acknowledgement of the childminder.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs and background are valued and respected by the childminder who uses her knowledge of individuals to guide her care. They are encouraged to understand and respect differences through the use of discussion and resources that reflect positive images so they develop a balanced view of society.

The childminder's previous experience of children with disabilities and her sensitive approach means that she is confident about caring for children who may have learning difficulties or disabilities. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities would be assessed and adaptations made to ensure they are given the right care to meet their needs.

Children behave very well, they begin to understand right and wrong through the clear explanations used by the childminder. They respond co-operatively to positive strategies employed by the childminder to manage their behaviour effectively. For example, the childminder enables the youngest children to play together by distracting them through offering different toys for each if their desires conflict.

Children feel well settled because the childminder arranges several visits before she begins to mind them. Parents have copies of documents such as contracts, and can see the certificate of registration as well as a written statement of policies and procedures about the childcare practice. The childminder provides parents with written or verbal information about the children's experiences and routines during the day. Parents exchange information with the childminder to ensure continuity of care is offered between their home and the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children receive good adult support to help them feel secure and confident. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The childminder participates in some training opportunities. For example, she has updated her knowledge of first aid and is aware of developments in child care. She has the Birth to three framework to inform herself of research on the care and welfare of babies and young children.

The childminder keeps records, policies and procedures for the efficient and safe management of the provision and shares her information about children with their parents. Some minor aspects of the written information are not up to date.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were three recommendations made and the childminder has made good progress in addressing these.

The fire blanket is accessible and secured in the kitchen so that is easily available in an emergency. Children now access a variety of equipment for play in the garden, including scooters and a trampoline. Their health is further protected as parents sign records prior to any medication being administered.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which can be seen 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):

- ensure that all hazards such as the plastic storage bag is not accessible to children
- ensure the written information provided for service users is 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