

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283115
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Cilla Rachel Mullane

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

This childminder registered as a childminder in 2004. She lives with her husband and young family. They live in a house in Greenhill, on the outskirts of Herne Bay. The house is situated within walking distance of schools, parks, shops and the beach.

The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for five children aged under eight years, or six children when her own child aged under eight years is cared for by his grandmother. She is currently caring for three children aged under eight years, and three aged over eight years on a part-time basis.

The childminder walks to the local primary school to take and collect children.

The family has a dog and a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a clean, hygienic home. Procedures such as cleaning the changing mat and potty help to protect the children from the spread of infection. Young children have their own face cloths and towels, but school age children share a towel in the bathroom, which encourages the spread of germs and infection. The accident record includes clear information about the nature of the incident, but has some incorrect details, for example, dates of birth and dates of accidents. The medication record also has missing details such as some parents' signatures. This has the potential to compromise children's safety. The childminder's first aid qualification has expired, she therefore does not have up-to-date information to enable her to act correctly if a child had an accident. This is a breach of the childminder's conditions of registration.

Parents provide main meals for young children who attend all day, so the childminder can be sure that they are fed according to parents' wishes. Children who attend after school are given snacks by the childminder, and she helps them make healthy choices and learn about healthy eating by providing fruit such as bananas, apples and oranges on a regular basis. In addition, children are keen to try more exotic fruits, and currently enjoy cutting up and preparing mangos and pineapples. Toddlers remain hydrated because the childminder offers them water frequently.

Children benefit from regular exercise, as they generally walk to and from school daily. Older children love burning up energy on the enclosed trampoline and riding on scooters in the garden.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel at home in the child friendly playroom, where they can choose from a range of safe and clean toys and equipment. Everything is low down and accessible, so children can help themselves to their favourite toys. Resources promote all areas of children's learning and include a range of books, a kitchen for role play, construction toys, toddlers sorters and stacking toys, and small world cars, figures and houses.

The childminding environment is safe. Young children cannot leave the house unattended as the front door is kept locked, but older children recognise the correct door key hanging up, so they can get out in the event of a fire. Safety gates are used to protect children and electric socket covers are in place. The dog lives in a kennel during childminding hours, further protecting children. On outings, and during trips to and from school, the youngest children ride in the buggy or reins and wrist straps are used to keep them safe. Older children know that they should not run ahead. Sleeping children are checked by means of a baby listening device.

The childminder has information about safeguarding children and making a referral in a folder, so would be able to refer to this and act in a child's best interests if she had concerns. She does not provide parents with any written information about her responsibility towards child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder is kind and caring towards the children. Small children develop trusting relationships with her because she is patient and kind. She gets down on the floor to support children's play, listening to and valuing their contributions. She is good at talking to young children, holding their interest by making up imaginary games, such as using figures and a toy car to pretend they are going to the shops with friends and family. The childminder is very good at responding to children's interests, she is led by what young children want to do, and as a result children are involved in meaningful play and learning experiences, from which they gain maximum enjoyment. For example, a toddler pointed at the play house and the childminder put it on the floor. A child showed an interest in colouring, and was immediately provided with resources to draw.

When older children return from school they have the opportunity to relax in the garden with the Playstation, play games or enjoy art and craft activities. In the holidays they enjoy outings to the beach or parks. They dress up as ghosts or skeletons for Halloween and have fun on 'Red Nose Day'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder treats children as individuals, she knows them well, and provides resources and activities which she knows they will enjoy. Children see diversity in society and learn about the world around them during outings locally. There are few positive images of different cultures and abilities reflected in the toys and books available to the children.

The childminder manages young children's behaviour effectively. She distracts small children with favourite toys. They copy her example of good manners, and say please and thank-you. Older children learn about right and wrong, because the childminder offers explanations as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable, and helps children understand the effect of their actions on the feelings of others.

Parents are well informed about their young children's activities during their days with the childminder. She uses a contact book to pass on information about any new words spoken, favourite toys, for example, Thomas the Tank Engine, and any concerns such as tummy upsets. Parents often telephone in the evening to discuss further. The childminder explains her responsibility to comply with National Standards to parents, but they do not receive any written information about the policies and procedures which underpin the childminding service, such as a behaviour management policy. Furthermore, they would only be given information about how to make a complaint if they ask for this. However, the childminder is aware of the correct procedure, and appropriately keeps a record of complaints. Parents give their written permission for many relevant aspects of their children's care, so they know that their children are cared for according to their wishes. For example, they give permission for outings, photographs and sun protection. However, the childminder does not obtain written permission for her to take small children on her bicycle in a child seat.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

The childminder is professional and friendly, and offers a supportive service to parents and children. She has not attended any recent training, but first aid training is booked for the near future, and she intends to learn more about the new Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder organises the space in her home well, with toys and resources readily available in the designated playroom, and quiet activities possible in the lounge. She manages her time well, supporting young children's play, and organising appropriate activities to enable older children to relax after the school day.

Most of the required documentation for childminding is kept to a satisfactory standard. For example, children's records contain sufficient detail, and emergency contacts are clearly listed. The certificate of registration is clearly displayed so that parents can see the conditions of registration. A clear record of attendance is maintained, but anticipated, rather than actual times of attendance are listed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder improve the children's safety by practising the evacuation plan. Older children know how to act in the event of a fire. She agreed to improve the care of the children by offering more opportunities for creative play; they have sufficient opportunities to enjoy art and crafts. Lastly, it was recommended that she obtain written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle; this permission is now obtained, so children are cared for according to parents' wishes in this respect.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation. Concerns were raised that the provider was minding over her registered number of children and failing to provide adequate supervision. Ofsted investigated by carrying out an unannounced visit during which the concerns were discussed and investigated with the provider. As a result of the visit two actions were set under National Standard 2. Ofsted was satisfied that the National Standards were being met and took no further action. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory. 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 the accident and medication records include all required details

- ensure that hand washing procedures are hygienic
- gain a current first aid qualification
- ensure that parents are informed of all policies and procedures which underpin the childminding practice, including the complaints procedure and the safeguarding children policy
- obtain parents' written permission to take children out in child seat on adult bicycle
- record children's exact times of arrival and departure in the record of attendance.

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