

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125735
Inspection date	16 May 2007
Inspector	Jane Wakelen
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?

The childminder was registered in 1988. She lives with her husband and two older children in Bredhurst, Gillingham. 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 before and after school, with one of these for one afternoon, every other week. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has two dogs. This is a smoking household.

The childminder is the supervisor of the local pre-school.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about hygiene procedures, such as washing their hands after using the toilet or before eating through reminders from the childminder. Children use antibacterial soap and

separate paper towels, helping prevent cross infection. Children are able to independently take themselves to the toilet, but younger children are unable to wash their hands downstairs as they have to use the kitchen sink which is too tall. The childminder has a first aid box but does not hold a current first aid certificate which prevents children being fully safeguarded in the event of an accident. Parents have given written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment if they are not able to be contacted.

Children are offered regular snacks and drinks, but are unable to make healthy choices as the childminder only offers one type of biscuit. Children can choose from a selection of drinks available, but are unable to independently help themselves. The childminder is fully aware of all the children in her care and discusses dietary requirements with parents when they start. The majority of children attend after school and do not have meals. Only one child has lunch with the childminder and is able to choose what she would like to eat, including healthy choices such as fruit, cucumber and ham.

Children have some opportunities to use large play equipment at the local park and benefit from fresh air at the park and whilst playing in the garden. The childminder understands the importance of promoting exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move around freely in the childminder's home and can easily access the limited resources. They are familiar with the routine, removing shoes and coats before entering the house and feel comfortable within the home, accessing the toys or going into the kitchen for a drink. Resources are in a satisfactory condition and children safely access the toys from boxes stored on the floor in the playroom. However, there is limited choice of resources and art and craft materials are not easily accessible, preventing children from having a good range of equipment. Some children live near by and are able to fetch toys with the childminder to offer a variety of resources. Children only attend for a very short time after school, which limits the impact of the limited selection of resources upon their development and interest.

Children play in a safe environment, where they have several possible escape routes in the event of an emergency. The childminder has a sound understanding of safety issues and talks to the children about evacuation and records the drills in writing. Fire prevention measures have been put in place such as smoke alarms and a fire blanket to ensure children are safe. Children gain an understanding about how to keep themselves safe as the childminder reminds them not to run indoors, or to be careful of the sharp edge on the sticky-tape dispenser. Procedures are in place for children that are not collected and attendance is kept in a daily diary, together with any visitors, promoting children's welfare.

The childminder has a weak understanding of child protection procedures, but is hoping to attend a training course and is developing a policy to inform parents of the procedures that will be followed. She is obtaining written information from the area safeguarding children committee to update her knowledge and understanding.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children all arrive happily, chatting to each other and come straight in, confident with the childminder and the environment. They are settled at the childminder's house and enjoy the

sense of belonging and familiarity with each other. They know the routine well, such as taking off their coats and shoes before they go indoors, in the porch and are offered a drink and a snack. Several children are then collected by their parents.

Children have a limited selection of toys and resources to choose from, such as a box of lego, a train track and electronic games. However, children are only with the childminder for a short time after school and therefore the impact of the lack of resources is minimised. However, the younger child attends for an afternoon and is unable to have a good selection of activities to play with. Occasionally the childminder will fetch some extra toys from the child's home to provide a greater variety.

Children enjoy looking at books and are excited when different equipment or books are made available, such as looking at some new books which had been donated to the childminder. They recognise familiar stories or words and ask to share them with their siblings at home. Occasionally the childminder, will bring home additional toys from her pre-school which the older children enjoy, such as the baby dolls, but this is not on a regular basis. Children visit the park with the childminder after school and enjoy using the large play equipment. They are able to choose to play in the garden when the weather is dry, allowing more choice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder treats all children with equal respect and values their individuality. She knows the children and their families well which helps them form good relationships and children to settle easily within the home. Children have limited access to resources that reflect positive images of diversity, but the childminder ensures she discusses any issues with the children to give them an informed choice. The childminder has limited experience of caring for children with a learning disability, but would ensure all children were included and adapt activities to suit their needs. She would liaise with parents to ensure the children received the right care to meet their needs.

Children behave well in the childminder's home. They know the rules of the setting and understand why they must follow them. Clear strategies are in place for children to learn about right and wrong and they are encouraged to develop their understanding by thinking about their actions and how these might affect others.

Parents are encouraged to exchange verbal information with the childminder on a daily basis and the childminder ensures that information from school is passed on to the parents. Children benefit from the good relationships shared between their parents and the childminder who welcomes them into her home. Parents have access to some written information to inform them of the childcare practice, such as contracts and some policies, such as the procedure for an uncollected child. They are also asked for written consent for photos, visiting the park and seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. However, parents have not been asked for consent for children travelling in the car.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder remains suitably qualified to work with young children, but she does not hold a current first aid certificate. All members of the household are suitable to be with the children and any visitors are written in the daily diary, alongside the children's names to promote their

welfare. Children are confident and secure in the childminder's care. They are encouraged to be independent using the toilet, hanging up their coats and make limited choices of activities to engage in.

The required documentation is in place and the childminder ensures children's information remains confidential. However, many registration forms need updating to ensure all information is still relevant to the individual child. There is basic written information recorded to support the care of children such as emergency evacuation and the uncollected child policy, but limited information available for parents regarding procedures the childminder follows regarding child protection and equal opportunities. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder agreed to three recommendations from her previous report. She was asked to develop written plans for activities for younger children while in the home, to organise her paperwork to sort out documentation she did not need and to review the range of equipment for under fives and the way items are presented.

The childminder mainly cares for children before and after school and only looks after one child of four years for one afternoon every other week. Therefore, the childminder felt written plans were not necessary. The file containing her documentation now just includes the items she needs and the other forms have been filed away. Finally, the equipment and choice for children under fives remains a recommendation from this inspection for all children.

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 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):

- extend choices at snack time and increase opportunities for children to be more independent
- improve knowledge of procedures to safeguard children, following the area safeguarding children's committees procedures

- extend resources and activities for children to provide them with choice and support their learning and development
- obtain written permission from parents to take children in the car
- undertake a first aid course and ensure this is maintained

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