

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125713
Inspection date	29 February 2008
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 15 in Westgate on Sea, Kent. There are two dedicated rooms on the ground floor, which are used for childminding. There is also an office/quiet room and a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder jointly child minds with her husband and has overall responsibility for the childminding practice. Her co-childminder works in a supportive role. She is registered to care for six children at any one time and together they may care for 12 children. They are currently minding a total of 18 children on a flexible basis.

The childminder generally walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder runs and attends the local parent and toddler groups.

The family has two dogs, eight rabbits, a gerbil and a snake.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean home where the childminder and her co-childminder have procedures in place to ensure toys and equipment are clean and hygienic for the children's play. Children learn about being healthy as they discuss healthy practices such as hand washing and making healthy choices with the childminder as they play. They know why they wash their hands and told the inspector they do not want to eat germs. In addition, there is liquid soap and paper towels so that children do not share towels to help prevent the spread of infection. Sick children are unable to attend to minimise cross infection and this is discussed with parents at the time of registration. The childminder has an up to date first aid certificate so she can act quickly should a child have an accident or become ill in her care. She has also obtained parental permission for emergency medical advice and treatment should a more serious accident occur. Accident and medication records are kept for the welfare of the children.

Children clearly enjoy outside play and put their coats on with excitement ready to play outside. There is a purposefully designed outdoor area appropriate for young children which includes a range of garden toys to promote their developing skills; for example, they are able to peddle, scoot, climb and slide. Children enjoy outings to a variety of places that interest them; for example, the fire station and the beach. Children learn about healthy food as the childminder serves snacks such as cheese, crackers and fruit including more unusual fruit such as kiwi. The parents provide lunch and although the childminder has not introduced a healthy eating policy she talks to the parents about providing healthy choices to ensure children remain well-nourished. Children are provided with plenty of drinks throughout the day to keep them hydrated. Older children help themselves to water. The childminder finds out about the children's schedules by talking to the parents. Children can sleep when they need to, this promotes their physical well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can move safely in the childminder and her co-childminder's home as they have undertaken risk assessments to ensure children are safe; for example, there are stair gates, plugs are covered, the garden has been adapted for children's play and the premises are secure. All toys are safe, clean and well maintained, enabling children to play safely. Children are learning about safety as the childminder talks about safety with them; for example, she showed a young child how to get down a step safely. There are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children and they are not allowed to go home with anyone unknown to the childminder or her co-minder. The childminder knows the recommendations for sleeping babies so they are put down to sleep appropriately. The childminder has a good understanding of how to safeguard children so they are protected from abuse. There is an evacuation plan, a fire extinguisher, smoke alarms and fire blanket to contribute to children's safety should there be a fire. Fire prevention and evacuation is discussed through activities; for example, visits to the fire station although they have not formally practised evacuation. The childminder has parental permission for transporting children in a vehicle and for taking them on outings and there are procedures to ensure children are safe when away from the home.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and content in the childminder's and her co-childminders care. She caters for the differences in the ages and stages of development by having a range of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment and observing the children to ensure they are happy and involved. Children's independence is promoted as they can select the toys they wish to play with as they are stored on shelves and in boxes that are easily accessible to them. In addition, children can use the toilet independently and wash their hands and are encouraged to put their coats on by themselves. Babies and young children have developed close relationships with childminder; for example, babies reach out their hands and 'call' for her attention and she quickly responds to them so they learn to trust her. Babies rock to music, 'dancing' with delight as they repeat their actions again and again learning about cause and effect as they play with the action-reaction toys. The childminder has completed 'Birth to three matters' training and is aware of meeting the babies developmental needs; however she has not yet introduced many natural items for babies and young children to explore and investigate.

Toddlers develop their skills as they roll cars forward and backwards and take toys in and out of boxes. Children's mathematical thinking is encouraged as the childminder uses language such as 'how many,' 'under' and 'on top' in play and older children enjoy games that involve numbers and counting. In addition, all children are encouraged to solve problems; for example, there are a range of puzzles for different ages and stages and the childminder gently encourages them to find the correct pieces, children become excited as they find the last piece of the puzzle and shout, 'I did it!' Children's language is encouraged as the childminder listens to them and responds; for example, to the babies babbles. Language is also fostered through singing and listening to stories which the children thoroughly enjoy and encourages an interest in reading. Children's creativity is promoted as they play with play dough and pretend play with small world toys, dressing up and role play toys; for example, children use their imaginations as they make pretend cakes for the childminder to eat. Photographs show older children enjoying age appropriate activities such as, bowling and playing on the computer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a sense of belonging in the childminder's and her co-minder's home as they have their own coat pegs and a place to put their bags. They develop a close and secure relationships as the childminder is attentive and sensitive to their needs and they readily approach her to play. There is an informal settling in procedure depending on the child's age and stage and the childminder works closely with the parents. As a result, children are settled in her care. The childminder set boundaries that the children understand. There are two main rules, 'keep hands and feet to ourselves and respect others.' Positive behaviour is encouraged through praise which promotes the children's self esteem. Inappropriate behaviour is dealt with depending on the children's ages and stages; for example, the childminder may redirect them or discuss the behaviour with them explaining what they did wrong. There is a behaviour policy that is shared with parents. Children learn to take turns, play co-operatively and share and older children are kind and helpful to younger children as the childminder is a good role model.

Children learn about the local community as they regularly go on visits to the beach and local places of interest such as Dover Castle. There are resources such as books and small world toys that reflect positive images of different cultures to help children develop knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's are taught to have positive images of differences through

discussion and all children have equal access to the toys and equipment. Children's record forms detail special requirements to enable the childminder to cater for their individual needs. The childminder and her co-minders business is open to all children as long as they can meet their needs adequately. The childminder's work closely with the parents and shares information on a daily basis to provide continuity of care for the children. Thank you cards and a discussion with a parent indicates they are extremely satisfied with their children's care. There are a few policies that inform parents of the childminder's service and parent's written permission has been sought. There is a complaints policy, all complaints will be investigated and a log kept to keep parents informed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She works closely with her co-childminder and they compliment each other to ensure the children needs are met; for example; the childminder may be interacting with the children in the playroom while they complete puzzles while her co-childminder supervises messy play. Although they work closely together the childminder takes most of the responsibility for the business side and paperwork and her co-childminder works in a supporting role. The childminder's have a dedicated space for the children consisting of a messy room, playroom and sleep room/office. Children clearly feel at home and are very confident. The daily routine is organised to include a range of activities depending on the ages and stages and needs of the children present and children are able to move freely and safely in the home. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children are maintained and stored securely in a locked filing cabinet. The attendance register shows that the childminder and her co-childminder comply with their conditions of numbers and their certificates of registration are clearly displayed. All adults living or working on the premises have current checks to show that they are suitable to be around children. The childminder has paperwork organised including public liability and business insurance on her car. All visitors are recorded for the protection of the children and to keep the parent informed. The childminder has attended a range of short courses and is currently updating her knowledge having undertaken a Diploma in Home Based Childcare, National Vocational Level III.

Improvements since the last inspection

After the last inspection the childminder received one recommendation this was to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Since the last inspection the childminder has purchased resources such as, toys and books that depict different families and beliefs. She recognises holidays and traditions from other cultures and children are taught to have positive images of differences as the childminder is a positive role model.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint relating to National Standard 1 - Suitable Person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety and National Standard 11 - Behaviour. Concerns were raised regarding the suitability of the childminder; adult: child ratios; the safety of children when being taken to and collected from school and behaviour management techniques. Ofsted carried out a visit to investigate. As a result of the visit five actions were raised under National Standard 2, National Standard 4: Physical Environment and National Standard 6. A further visit took place and Ofsted was satisfied that

the provider had taken satisfactory steps to meet the requirements of the actions raised. 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

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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):

- consider developing a healthy eating policy to share with parents
- introduce additional opportunities for babies and young children to explore natural objects through the daily routine.

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