

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265989
Inspection date	07 August 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 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 2004. She lives with her husband and three children aged five, three and 18 months in Gillingham, Kent. All areas of the property are used for childminding apart from the master bedroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children at any one time and is currently minding 11 children at various times during the week. The childminder takes and collects from local schools.

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and a member of an approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Older children visit the toilet independently on the first floor of the childminder's home and gain a satisfactory understanding about hygiene procedures, such as washing their hands after

using the toilet. However, children are not protected against cross infection as they all use the same hand towel. Younger children's welfare is also not fully promoted against cross infection as the childminder does not use a changing mat to change children's nappies, thus not fully promoting children's well being. There is a sickness policy in place, informing parents that children who are unwell cannot attend the childminder's home and permission has been obtained from parents regarding emergency medical treatment, ensuring children are kept safe. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate. Children enjoy playing in the garden, but are not encouraged to wear sun hats, although the childminder applies sun cream. However, parents are not asked for written permission for the application of sun cream to support good practice and promote children's welfare.

Children are able to make some healthy choices for snacks and meal times as the childminder has a good understanding of children's likes and dislikes. She encourages children to try different fruits and offers yoghurts for snacks. Many children stay for lunch and an evening meal, enjoying meal times with their friends. Their dietary needs and any food allergies are taken into account when the childminder plans her meals and a sample menu is shown to parents, informing them of the types of meals their children will be offered. Older children are able to help themselves to drinks and younger children have their own drink container which is available at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have regular access to the large garden enjoying the good play opportunities. However, the childminder has not addressed several hazards which put children's safety at risk, such as the glass window in the shed, the area at the side of the house which is used for some storage materials and some plants. Children play in the downstairs of the childminder's home which is safe for children. The childminder has implemented several safety features to ensure children's safety at all times, such as finger guards on the doors, socket covers in place and the stairgates at the top and bottom of the stairs. Children gain a basic understanding about keeping themselves and others safe because the childminder reminds children about picking toys up, so they do not trip over them and reminding children to close the stairgate to prevent younger ones climbing the stairs. Children enjoy using the paddling pool, but are discouraged from taking the younger ones in because of the dangers of the water. This occasionally causes a hazard if the childminder goes indoors to collect anything, leaving little ones unsupervised for a few minutes.

Fire prevention procedures have been implemented and children learn about evacuating the childminder's home in an emergency. The childminder records these practices promoting children's welfare and keeping evidence for parents to see. The childminder has several written policies to share with parents regarding health and safety and accident and emergency procedures, promoting children's welfare and informing parents of the service she provides. Children are well protected when on outings as the childminder has a travel first aid kit and has children's emergency details on small cards and on her mobile phone. Parents are asked to give written consent to allow their children to accompany the childminder.

The childminder has a good understanding of safeguarding children and understands the procedures to follow if she has any concerns, regarding children in her care. There is a well written policy informing parents about the information the childminder obtains and the procedures she follows, including a visitors' book to record all visitors to her home during childminding hours, therefore protecting children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children use the whole of the downstairs of the childminder's house, moving freely between the two rooms, making choices about what activities they wish to play with. The space is limited and therefore the childminder ensures children make full use of the large garden, extending opportunities for children to have room to move and play with a good variety of toys and resources. Toys are stored in storage boxes in the kitchen/diner, many with labels and children either self-select resources or request certain ones from the childminder.

Children benefit from the childminder's good understanding about child development and the planned activities she organises each week to provide them with interesting opportunities, such as making masks and plaster moulds. Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's home and access all areas freely, enjoying playing with each other. Toys and resources are organised to meet the different ages of the children, with small resources kept out of reach of the younger ones, such as the beads and some small world toys.

All children are able to access the different activities, both indoors and outdoors, with the childminder adapting activities to meet the children's needs, such as allowing the younger children to play in the paddling pool with balls and not water. The older children benefit from caring for the younger children, understanding their different needs and the younger children benefit from having good role models.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel relaxed and settled in the childminder's home. They learn to play with each other accepting each others differences and feel comfortable to ask questions, which the childminder answers in simple language. Thus children are able to gain an understanding about diversity in society. Toys, resources and positive images in books help to promote children's knowledge supporting all children's sense of belonging and helping them value their individuality. The childminder has a good understanding of the different needs of the children and supports their differences, such as allowing the older children to play on the computer to be by themselves or putting the little ones to bed when they become tearful due to tiredness.

Children benefit from the childminder's understanding and knowledge of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She works with the parents to obtain all the relevant information and ensures all children feel integrated into the setting, accessing all the toys and resources, whilst meeting their individual needs. Daily, verbal and written communication supports children's development.

Children behave well when with the childminder. They learn to share the toys and take turns using the slide and the buggies. Older children are involved in forming the house rules, allowing them to take ownership and gaining an understanding of right and wrong. The childminder takes into account the ages and stages of development of the individual child when addressing unwanted behaviour and uses positive strategies to promote desired behaviour.

The childminder has formed good relationships with both the children and their parents which helps children feel a sense of belonging and confident in the childminder's home. Parents are kept fully informed about the care their child is receiving and the activities they are involved in. The younger children have a contact book, in which the childminder records information

about their day for the parents to keep as a record of their time at the childminder's house. Children experience continuity of care because the parents liaise daily with the childminder to agree strategies and exchange information to ensure children's individual needs are met. Parents give consent for some aspects of care and have access to written policies supporting the partnership with the childminder and the care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, compact environment. They benefit from the childminder's knowledge and experience of child care and the relevant courses she has attended to extend her skills and knowledge. Children enjoy their time at the childminder's home, going on different outings with their friends and having opportunities to try new experiences, such as travelling on the bus or visiting the reptile centre.

The childminder has organised all her paperwork to ensure all the required documentation is in place and up to date. She has implemented good practice issues, such as implementing a visitors' book and a written fire drill record to support children's safety and well being. Written policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents. This ensures children's needs are met and all relevant information is shared with the parents. A good two-way flow of information ensures continuity of care. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation from the previous inspection regarding the availability of toys and resources reflecting positive images of diversity. Children have access to a range of resources, dolls, books and small world gaining an understanding about diversity. The childminder intends to join the library to further support this area.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of 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 good. 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):

- improve hygiene procedures for children, especially during nappy changing and hand washing
- improve procedures for children's safety whilst in the sun to promote being healthy
- ensure all areas, both indoors and outdoors are safe for children to play

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