

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125861
Inspection date	15 November 2007
Inspector	Freeda Wildon
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 outstanding. 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 1994. She lives with her husband and daughter in Ramsgate, Kent. The whole 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 six children at any one time and is currently minding six children under eight on a part-time basis. She co-minds with her daughter two days a week. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She attends the local carer and toddler groups. The family has a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a clean and nurturing environment where they learn about a healthy lifestyle. The childminder provides healthy snacks for the children which includes several of the children's 'five a day'. Posters show children information about healthy food, and activities

reinforce the message of healthy eating. Children are able to say which foods are good for them. As a result, they are making healthy choices. Food provided by parents is stored appropriately in a clean fridge. Children's individual dietary needs are known and respected. Drinks are always available to keep their bodies hydrated.

Very good hygiene practices are in place to prevent the spread of infection, for example effective nappy changing procedures. Children learn about good hygiene practices through the daily routine, such as, hand washing after using the toilet and before eating. They know the routine and take themselves to the bathroom to wash hands before eating. They have separate towels which are kept on individually labelled hooks for recognition thus preventing the spread of infection. Even babies wash their hands after nappy changing and this teaches them about hand washing from an early age.

The childminder has a good understanding of young children's illness and has attended training for acute illness and chronic conditions. She has up-to-date information about contagious diseases in her portfolio which she shares with parents. The childminder has an early alert chart showing signs and symptoms to cover serious illnesses; this reassures parents and enables her to take prompt action. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to help the childminder act in the best interest of children if they have an accident or become ill.

Physical play is a regular feature of the day. Young children enjoy music and movement regularly. They frequently play in the garden. Children regularly visit the park, play centre, go for walks and go on outings. As a result, they have lots of opportunities to develop their physical skills. Babies are gaining control of their bodies as they pull themselves up and cruise around the furniture.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminding environment is welcoming to children of all ages. Children move around freely and safely because the childminder undertakes frequent informal daily risk assessments. The childminder makes good use of the space and provides a cosy corner for the children to play quietly. They have access to a good range of meaningful toys that are clean and safe. There is a written evacuation plan which is practised to help children leave the home in an emergency. Even young children know the procedure. Smoke alarms, fire blanket, fire extinguisher and dangerous gas detection equipment are in place to contribute to children's safety in an emergency.

There are stringent procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. This ensures that children only go home with authorised persons. Effective procedures are in place for outings to keep children safe. For example, the childminder takes children's details with her on trips away from the home to cover emergencies. She has procedures to keep children safe when she uses her vehicle. Children are learning to keep themselves safe when out of the house, because the childminder talks to them about road safety.

Children are very well safeguarded from harm because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures from attendance at recent training. There is a good system in place for emergency cover if there is an emergency in the childminder's family. Parents are aware of the named person and a suitability check has been undertaken with the criminal records bureau. This safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and secure in the care of the childminder because she meets their individual needs. They are developing well in their confidence and self-esteem because the childminder constantly praises and encourages them. They are encouraged to be independent, choosing their own activities and leading the play. The childminder organises the activities so that all children are able to take part and have equal access to the toys. They are acquiring new skills because the childminder supports the children very well.

The childminder has a good knowledge of child development which she uses to plan a meaningful range of activities for children of all ages. She gathers information from parents to enable her to provide age and developmentally appropriate activities for the children. She uses the Birth to three matters framework to provide suitable activities for younger children. The childminder uses the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to plan activities for children between three and five years. She evaluates the activities, using observation to plan for children's next steps. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning. Children attending before and after school are able to relax after a hard day at school or take part in the activities. During the holidays they enjoy activities away from the home.

All children are having fun. Music and movement is very popular amongst young children and they laugh and ask for more. For example, they sing and move to 'row, row, row your boat' and 'ring a ring a roses'. Children are enjoying books and snuggle up to the childminder to listen to their favourite stories. They know stories well and listen to each other reading. Children sing as they play. They have numerous opportunities to use their imagination, for example, they cook in the home corner making sandwiches and sharing. They understand about sharing and use this in their play saying 'lets share the sandwich'. They dress up in their favourite costumes, putting clothes on each other and the childminder reminds children about respecting others by asking permission to do so. This helps children build positive relationships.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has a good understanding of equality and provides an inclusive service where all are welcome to the setting. She has attended equal opportunities awareness and learning difficulties and disability training, so she is able to meet individual needs and include all children in the activities. Children are learning to accept differences and to respect others because the childminder is a good role model and has an extensive range of resources to help children understand. As well as outings to the park, nature reserves and to feed the ducks, children are contributing to local fund raising events to help them understand about others who are less fortunate than they are. They have frequent opportunities to meet and form new relationships at social groups.

Children are well behaved because strategies to manage their behaviour are positive and appropriate to the stage of development. They feel valued because they are frequently praised for their achievement. The childminder is a good role model and she speaks to them calmly and politely. She teaches children about right and wrong through the routine and by using explanation. As a result, they are secure and happy. Children feel welcome because their photographs are displayed on the towel and coat pegs. They are able to bring comforters and a settling-in policy helps them separate from parents.

Many cards and letters show that parents are extremely happy with the care provided. A good partnership with parents benefits the children enormously. The childminder shares detailed information about her service and provides parents with daily written and verbal information about the children's welfare. This ensures continuity of care. The childminder frequently seeks informal feedback from parents about the service and bi-monthly she spends more time with parents looking at ways to make improvements. Parents have access to an range of comprehensive policies which they sign to say that have read. Contracts between the childminder and parents are in place, setting out the business agreements and these are reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate care is provided. Posters are displayed giving parents information on how to complain and the complaints procedure reflects the new regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for who she provides. Children are developing well because the childminder has good organisational skills. The routine is planned to meet the needs of the children and includes times to play, rest, eat and for outings. The home is children friendly and safe and as a result children are happy and secure.

The childminder is committed to providing a good service for parents and their children. She has a good knowledge of childcare and has a childcare qualification. This is enhanced by her commitment to improve her knowledge and therefore makes the most of opportunities to attend relevant workshops and training courses. This ensures she is able to provide appropriate care for the children she looks after. She frequently evaluates her service, seeking parents' suggestions for improvement.

All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and to promote the welfare and care of children is maintained to a high standard, stored securely and confidentially. The registration certificate is displayed at the entrance for parents to see. Clear accident records contain the nature of the injury and action taken. The attendance register records the exact times of children's arrival and departure. Effective contingency plans are in place to cover emergencies and parents are aware of the person's suitability. All adults living in the household have suitability checks. This protects children from harm.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made. It was to ensure that prior written consent for medication is recorded in line with current guidance. Appropriate written consent for medication is in place, resulting in positive outcomes for 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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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