

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 126539  
**Inspection date** 12 July 2007  
**Inspector** Susan Jennifer Scott

**Type of inspection** Integrated  
**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1990. She lives with her husband and five children, whose ages vary from four to 17 years. They live in a house in Snodland, within walking distance of local amenities. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed small garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for three children under eight years. No overnight care is offered. At present she cares for seven children, on a part time basis. Of these, four are under five years old. The childminder is a member of the West Kent Childminding Network, although no children are in receipt of funded education at present

The family have a cat and a rabbit. The childminder also runs a local crèche for a multi agency group and collects children from the local school and pre-schools.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of their personal care through routines such as washing their hands before eating and after playing with pets. They use individual towels to avoid any risks of cross infection. Children's health is safeguarded by the use of records, such as the accident and medication records, and first aid training which enables safe practice and treatment by the childminder.

Children's physical development is supported effectively through the opportunities they have to play and exercise outside throughout the year. The children are provided with interesting outdoor play experiences, such as the canal system in the garden. They also enjoy visits to parks and facilities such as local toddler groups. Children learn how to keep themselves healthy as the childminder uses everyday opportunities well, in order to support their understanding. For example, children are provided with appropriate clothes for the weather.

Children are offered healthy choices of food and drink at regular times during the day. Their dietary needs and preferences are discussed with parents so the childminder can ensure they receive foods they enjoy. For instance, children eat sandwiches of ham with cucumber, tomato and pepper for lunch, followed by yogurt or fresh fruit and this promotes healthily eating habits.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. They are able to play and rest safely in the home, although space is limited, the childminder maximises all that is available. She ensures the layout of activities is interesting for all children. Children rest in the main lounge which is also the play area and fairly crowded with resources and toys. However, the childminder is careful to provide suitable toys and resources for children to access freely.

Children access an attractive range of toys and resources including a suitable small bench and low tables. Their play is promoted and their interest maintained as the childminder varies what is available. There is a range of toys and equipment available for use with babies such as soft toys and a highchair.

There are some hazards such as plastic carrier bags, which represent a possible danger, but the childminder supervises children vigilantly. All toys and resources are checked for safety and the equipment is well maintained so that children are well protected, ensuring their safety. For instance, the childminder has sought out information on the recent regulations for car travel and knows what car seats or belts are required. Children are also safeguarded by the effective safety measures provided, such as, car breakdown cover and good emergency planning.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's clear understanding of child protection and her understanding of the records, procedures and sources of advice.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children who attend are confident and secure; they develop good levels of self-esteem and have a warm and relaxed relationship with the childminder. They access a variety of play space both inside and outside in the garden where they are able to play and exercise. They also enjoy good opportunities to visit facilities and play in the local environment. The childminder has a good understanding of young children's development and plans how to build on their learning effectively. For example, she observes children's play and uses her observations to assess what she should provide to enable their progress.

The children benefit from the childminder's understanding of child development and use of the Birth to three matters framework. She plans interesting activities appropriate to the ages and stages of the children. As a result, babies and young children enjoy a range of experiences that are well suited to their stage of development. Children enjoy imaginative play using small world toys like the play canal. They have conversations about the boats with the childminder, who encourages them to build their language skills and understanding through their play. Children develop their creative skills through planned craft activities and experience good practical opportunities to explore sound and music.

### **Nursery Education**

Teaching and learning is satisfactory.

There were no children receiving funded education at the time of inspection, but the evidence suggests that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The childminder has a secure understanding of children's development and how she can build on this to enable progress through the stepping stones of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Children are likely to respond positively to the learning experiences organised by the childminder as she plans activities that are based on her assessments of their development. However, the children do not benefit fully from observations and assessments that accurately reflects the stepping stones of the curriculum.

Funded children who previously attended experienced a balanced programme of activities that offered planned and spontaneous opportunities to build upon their skills and understanding. Children are encouraged to behave well as the childminder provides positive acknowledgement of their skills when planning for their progress. Appropriate provision was made to enable communication skills and mathematical understanding to be nurtured through practical activities, such as games.

The photographic evidence and children's records show that they experienced varied activities in the community that interested and stimulated them, as well as planned opportunities to explore a range of cultures by celebrating different festivals. Current practice enables all children to build upon their understanding of healthy routines and keeping safe by learning about road safety. The childminder plans for the acquisition of physical skills during indoor and outdoor play. Previous observations and records show children enjoying play with home made musical instruments and using pretend play to support their creative development.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children enjoy a good range of activities that promote equality and reflect positive images of diversity and disabilities. For example, there are books, dolls and dressing up clothes reflecting diversity. The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity and has a positive attitude towards exploring differences, which provides children with a balanced view of society. Children with any learning difficulties or disabilities would be assessed and liaison with parents is used to ensure all children are given the right care to meet their needs.

Children receive praise and encouragement to support positive behaviour. The childminder is patient and enjoys caring for children, providing support for their play which develops their understanding of how they should behave. For instance, children are encouraged to share and say 'thank you' when they are given toys or drinks. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The childminder develops a working partnership with parents and promotes the welfare of the children by spending time discussing their individual needs with them. She gathers individual information before children are placed in her care ensuring they can be cared for appropriately. For example, food likes and dislikes and medical information are noted and discussed to ensure the childminder delivers individual care to suit children's needs. Parents access a range of clear written information to support their understanding of the service. For instance, the emergency plans, the contact number for the regulator and vehicle records are shared. Contact books inform parents of activities provided for children and the childminder uses photographs and examples of their handicrafts to support this.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. Children benefit from the good support and encouragement they receive from the childminder who uses her experience and training well. They have free access to interesting play areas, as well as safe and clean resources. The safety of the environment is occasionally compromised, but the childminder supervises children effectively when they are in her care.

The childminder is aware of her responsibility to ensure the documentation is up-to-date and she has the required procedures in place. Parents are kept informed of children's development through the use of contact books and they access a range of information to encourage a well informed partnership. For example, the statement of service that the childminder uses is shared with parents.

The childminder keeps herself well informed of current childcare practices by attending a good variety of training courses, to ensure her knowledge and skills are up-to-date. She is continuing to build on her own knowledge and skills, for instance, by developing and adapting information from the Birth to three matters framework. She has not fully developed use of the Curriculum for the foundation stage and it's stepping stones as she rarely provides funded education. Children enjoy their play and are stimulated by the varied activities provided to promote

individual progress. The evidence suggests that the provision of nursery education is satisfactory. The childminder's secure knowledge of how children learn and her planning for individuals promotes the effectiveness of her service.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Children are protected by safety measures implemented by the childminder since the last care inspection when as she has produced a comprehensive risk assessment and assessed any risks to children. Although there is a similar recommendation from this inspection, it is apparent that the childminder relies on her good supervision of children to prevent access to hazards that are not easily prevented.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the childminder or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The childminder is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which can be seen on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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 the risk assessment identifies any possible hazards and action is taken to prevent these

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop use of the Foundation Stage curriculum and records of children's development so that they reflect the stepping stones

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)