



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125591
Inspection date	14 December 2005
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 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 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged over 14 in Margate, 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 and for a maximum of nine children when she is working with an assistant. The childminder is currently minding nine children on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect the children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has three dogs and a cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The premises are clean. The children learn about good hygiene practices through the daily routine. For example, they wash their hands after visiting the toilet and use disposable towels, which helps to prevent the spread of infection. Current first aid training, a sick child policy, accident and medicine records are in place. These help the childminder act in the best interest of children if they have an accident or become unwell.

The children enjoy healthy snacks provided by the childminder, such as fresh fruit and sandwiches. The children have access to drinks throughout the day, to help keep them hydrated. The young children are able to sleep and rest according to their parents' wishes.

Physical play is a regular feature of the day. The children go for daily walks to the beach, where they enjoy running, skipping and playing games. The garden is only used in fine weather; however, the children attend a toddlers group regularly, where they have opportunities to use a range of challenging equipment such as a climbing frame. The babies acquire new physical skills inside the childminder's home, such as crawling, sitting, pulling to stand and walking around the furniture.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are able to move around freely and safely. The premises are safe and secure, because the childminder makes regular informal assessments. Toys are clean and well maintained; this enables the children to play safely. There are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of the children. For example, the childminder has introduced a password system if a parent is not able to collect the child. The childminder's understanding of recommendations for sleeping babies, procedures for outings and her knowledge of child protection issues, contribute to the children's welfare and safety.

There is an evacuation plan and there are smoke alarms, a fire extinguisher, and a fire blanket to contribute to the children's safety, if they need to evacuate the premises.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are settled, because they are cared for in an environment that allows them to experience a wide selection of activities. They are confident and make themselves at home, as they play happily along side each other. The children's work and photographs are displayed and show that they clearly enjoy taking part in

creative activities, such as painting and craft work. The children talk about past events, such as visiting restaurants and about the food they enjoyed. The children develop good relationships with the childminder and her assistant, as they enjoy having stories read to them and singing their favourite songs. They learn simple words as they point to the pictures. They are learning to count, recognise shapes and colours.

The children are developing well in their own confidence and self-esteem. They are learning to be independent in personal care. For example, they go independently to the toilet and help themselves to tissues. The children are interested, excited and confidently speak to their friends, the childminder and her assistant. They are confident because the childminder praises and encourages the children, valuing their achievements.

The childminder has enhanced her childcare knowledge by accessing the Birth to three matter framework training. She knows the children well and plans activities around the children's interests. She has yet to establish a formal system of observations to identify the children's next steps to development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are content, well behaved and settled in the childminder's care, because the childminder helps them to have a sense of belonging. A calendar informs the children about present and future events, such as each other's birthdays. The children clearly enjoy the childminder's and her assistant's company and readily approach them to play. The children are learning about valuing each other, turn taking and sharing, because the childminder provides good resources borrowed from the childminding network. Praise, encouragement and strategies such as time out, help the children understand about boundaries.

The children's self-esteem is promoted through encouragement, praising achievements and displaying the children's work on the walls. The children have access to a range of activities and resources, to promote a view of the world and to increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. For example, the childminder provides books, games, play people and visits to local community. Visits to the surrounding area include visits to the zoo, beach, harbour and wild life park. The childminder has experience caring for children with special needs and works in partnership with parents to meet the needs of all children. The children learn about others with disabilities, because the children and childminder visit the local link scheme.

Contracts are in place recording business arrangements and appropriate parents' permissions are obtained. As a result, there is consistency between home and the childminder. Effective communication from the childminder informs the parents of the care that their children receive. Records are stored securely and safely. However, the recording of some records does not ensure confidentiality when sharing with the parents. A range of policies is available to the parents, but as yet the complaints policy does not fully reflect the recent changes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The attendance register shows when the children arrive and depart. The childminder works with her husband full time and her daughter assists on a part time basis, but the register does not show when they are present. The registration certificate is displayed for the parents to see and Ofsted records show that all the adults living on the premises have clearance. The childminder has attended the Birth to three matters framework and uses this on an informal basis.

The children are able to move around freely and safely. The daily routine is organised to include quiet times, active times, meal times and outings. As a result, the children are secure and confident in the childminder's care. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and to promote the welfare and care of the children, is maintained and stored securely. However, the prior written consent for medication needs attention. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last Ofsted inspection, the childcare inspector made four recommendations. These were: acknowledge a wider range of festivities to promote equality of opportunity; consider the benefits of using daily contact books; ensure children's attendance is accurately recorded at all times and ensure hygienic practices are followed when changing nappies. The childminder has provided appropriate resources to promote equality. As a result, the children have access to a range of activities and resources to promote a view of the world and to increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. The childminder did not consider written daily contact books beneficial to her childminding service. However, effective communication from the childminder informs the parents of the care that their children receive. Hygiene procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection. This contributes to positive outcomes for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- develop a system of observations to identified children's next steps to development
- keep a record when assistants are present.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk