

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 126822
Inspection date 17 August 2007
Inspector Stephanie Graves

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 1999. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Dartford, Kent. The whole of the 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 four children, under eight years of age, on a full time basis. She walks to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children and attends the local toddler group.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children take part in a range of opportunities, which help them to learn about good health and hygiene issues. For example, they are encouraged to clean their teeth and wash their hands at the appropriate times. The childminder ensures all surfaces are cleaned hygienically and provides

children with individual hand towels for drying their hands. These procedures help to prevent cross infection. The required records are in place to help ensure children are well cared for if they have an accident or need medication, although the prior written consent to administer medication has not always been recorded for individual entries. This could mean that proper care and follow-up for children needing medication are not assured. Children who become ill are supported well because the childminder ensures parents are informed and children with infectious illnesses do not attend the setting. This helps to prevent the spread of infectious ailments. Children enjoy being active but also have space to rest or sleep in comfort. This helps to ensure their physical development and sense of wellbeing is promoted.

Children are provided with regular drinks to keep them hydrated and the childminder encourages them to make healthy choices regarding the food they eat. Meals include at least three fresh vegetables, while desserts and snacks consist of fresh fruit or yoghurt. Children also have opportunities to help prepare food, for instance, as they help to make a sandwich for lunch. They also enjoy pretending to serve a healthy meal during role play and are currently growing their own runner beans in the garden. This means children learn about healthy foods through varied experiences. Individual dietary needs are respected through the childminder and parents working together to meet the needs of the children attending.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can move around and play within safe boundaries in the childminder's home. This is because she keeps the premises secure and only allows children access to areas used for childminding. She has effective emergency procedures in place; risk assesses her home regularly and supervises children closely at all times. There is plenty of unobstructed space for children to play and toys and resources are checked regularly to ensure they remain safe and suitable. This helps to avoid accidental injury. The childminder practises her emergency evacuation procedure with children to help develop their awareness of fire safety. Children learn about personal safety, because the childminder explains why certain rules are necessary. For example, they know why they should hold her hand when walking by the road and understand the importance of keeping small parts away from younger children and babies to avoid the risk of choking. Procedures such as these help children learn to keep others safe as well as themselves.

Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has a sound understanding of the measures necessary to safeguard them at all times. For example, she is aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what to do in the event of a concern. She shares information with parents and makes sure any concerns are dealt with appropriately. This helps to ensure that children's welfare comes first.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make themselves at home and enjoy playing with the range of toys and resources provided. They are settled and enjoy the childminder's input as they play and learn together. They can move around freely and access a full range of play experiences, both indoors and out. These include as role play equipment, ride on toys, art and craft, mark making, small world activities and construction. Activities promote all areas of learning and development and the childminder understands the experiences children need in order to progress. She implements concepts from the Birth to three matters framework for babies and very young children, which

helps to ensure the experiences provided are suitable and varied. Stimulating interactive toys encourage very young children to learn through using their senses and help them make connections as they play. For instance, they speak into a toy phone at the same time as the childminder answers her home telephone. They demonstrate curiosity and interest as they observe older children taking part in their chosen play pursuits. This helps them to integrate with others.

Children's communication skills are promoted as the childminder talks with them as they play and learn. She asks effective questions to help encourage them to think and respond. For example, she may ask children to identify shapes or count as they build blocks and can be heard asking them questions about size and quantity. Children are heard to answer and make observational comments, such as, 'it's tiny' as they talk about the childminder's pet fish. They enjoy talking about their favourite activities and can be heard saying 'I like painting' and 'I used scissors' as they describe how they cut out shapes for a craft activity. This helps them to recall previous experiences. They enjoy songs and stories and opportunities to discuss their home news and interests. Overall the childminder ensures a good range of play experiences are available to promote children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children of all ages and stages of development are welcomed and treated according to their individual needs and with equal concern. The very young children in the childminder's care are continually acknowledged and appropriately supported, which helps them to develop self assurance and a sense of belonging. They learn about the differences between themselves and others through toys and resources promoting positive images of diversity. These include a small world activity resources and books. They also learn about the local community through outings and visits to the local toddler group. These experiences encourage children's social skills and help them learn about the world around them.

Children are well behaved and play happily together. They are encouraged to behave positively and use good manners and the childminder is a good role model who praises them regularly. This helps to promote their self esteem. Children benefit from consistency of care, through the partnership with parents. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. However, the correct information regarding the complaints procedure has not been fully made available to parents. Children's progress is shared through written contact notes and verbal communication. This mutual exchange of information helps to ensure children's needs are supported equally between the childminder and parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and settled within a warm, welcoming and well organised environment. They feel secure and at ease with the childminder and one another. The childminder is well qualified and ensures her first aid certificate is kept up to date. The registration certificate is displayed for parents along with a range of other information. Although the procedures for medication and complaints need some improvement, a good range of documentation and records are all in place. Daily attendance records show clear arrival and departure times for children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has a

positive attitude towards improving her service. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted, due to the policies and procedures, used by the childminder, which help to underpin her professional practice. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was left one recommendation: to practise the emergency evacuation procedure with the children in her care. Improvements have been made and the childminder practises this procedure with the children regularly.

The childminder has taken steps towards improving the service provided and ensuring children are safe and well cared for at all times.

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

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):

- ensure prior written consent to administer medication is obtained for each particular circumstance
- ensure the correct information regarding the complaints procedure is made available to parents.

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