

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 126443
Inspection date 21 January 2008
Inspector Susan Jennifer Scott

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1994. She lives with her husband and three children in a detached house in Meopham. The ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a secure rear garden available for outside play. Children mainly use the ground floor of the premises. There are shops, parks, schools and pre-schools close by.

The childminder is registered to provide care for five children under eight years of age, three of these may be under five years old. Overnight care is not included in the registration. There is a total of five children minded on a part time basis.

The childminder attends various local carer and toddler groups and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of their personal care through routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after playing. Children's health is safeguarded by the hygiene routines, such as the use of a soap dispenser although they all share a towel to dry their hands. This could expose them to risks of cross infection. Parents do not have access to written information concerning sickness procedures.

Children's health is safeguarded by the use of clear records, such as the accident and medication records, and first aid training enables safe practice and treatment by the childminder. She is prepared to seek emergency treatment if needed and has written consent provided by parents to ensure prompt treatment if needed in an emergency.

The children receive regular food and drinks which parents can supply if they wish as the childminder is flexible. She is happy to supply freshly cooked meals which comply with dietary requirements if parents request this. Children are encouraged to sit at the dining table to eat together which promotes good social opportunities and good habits. The childminder provides snacks that are healthy, such as fruit and freshly cooked meals, such as spaghetti bolognese. Children can access drinks in the kitchen, helping themselves to beakers of drink which are regularly filled. This helps children develop healthy eating habits.

Children's physical development is supported through the opportunities they have to play and exercise outside. The children use the play facilities in local parks and the large garden. This enables them to experience fresh air and experience a healthy lifestyle, even during winter weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in a safe, secure environment as the home is clean and welcoming. The childminder enables all the minded children to feel welcome and relaxed here as they are treated as part of the family. The children have access to a good range of toys and equipment to meet their needs and can select from the plentiful, visible resources which are varied to maintain their interest. All toys and resources are cleaned and checked for safety so that children are well protected, ensuring their safety.

Children are made aware of their own safety if they are old enough to understand, as the childminder develops their awareness of the dangers of traffic when they are out. The childminder maintains a safe environment using informal risk assessments, is aware of the hazards and has taken good precautions. For example, there are measures in place to protect children, such as socket covers to restrict children's access to the electrical sources. Children are protected from harm as the childminder has an understanding of child protection procedures and sources of advice, therefore safeguarding their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children successfully develop their confidence through chatting and playing with other children and the childminder. They are happy and relaxed because the childminder is warm and affectionate, for instance, they are encouraged to talk about their play and share their ideas. The childminder supports the toddler when he plays, allowing him the confidence to explore the toys and games provided. This encourages secure relationships to be built.

Children show independence and make choices about the activities they become involved in. They enjoy playing with the varied toys and resources which are made easily accessible by the childminder. The childminder encourages young children and toddlers to learn new skills, such as playing imaginative games and encouraging them to explore. For example, children enjoy playing the piano and singing.

Children enjoy their play and build on their learning owing to the good support and positive encouragement of the childminder. For instance, the childminder acknowledges the toddler's efforts when he completes a high tower of bricks and she encourages him to count these as they build it. Children enjoy playing in the local community on a regular basis. They develop and extend their social skills by visiting local toddler groups, such as the music group and Sunday school where they can play with other children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's needs and background are valued and respected by the childminder who uses her knowledge of individuals to guide her care. They are encouraged to understand and respect differences through the use of discussion and resources that reflect diversity. This enables children to develop an understanding of society.

Children with any learning difficulties, disabilities or additional needs are assessed and liaison with parents is used to ensure children are given the right care to meet their needs. Children behave well, they benefit from good explanations used by the childminder and the use of clear rules. This ensures children know how to behave appropriately and they respond positively to the strategies employed by the childminder to promote good behaviour, such as helping to tidy away toys.

Children feel well settled because the childminder arranges visits with parents before she begins to mind them. Parents can access a file of documents, such as the certificate of registration as well as a written statement of policies and procedures which inform them of the childcare practice. The childminder provides parents with verbal information about the children's experiences and routines during the day or she provides a written diary if they would like this. Parents are encouraged to exchange information with the childminder to ensure continuity of care is offered between the setting and their home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder remains qualified to work with young children. Children have good relationships with the childminder and household members who are vetted for their suitability to be with

young children. The childminder participates in some training opportunities. For example, she has updated her knowledge of first aid and child protection.

The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure the children's individual needs are fully met. She is aware of all the required information about changes to the procedures, such as how to record any complaints if any were made. The documentation that is required is in place and regularly updated. Records are kept confidentially maintaining the child's privacy. Parents are kept informed of children's development and can access some written information about the service. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made progress in addressing the recommendations made at the previous inspection by developing more activities for children to explore and investigate during their play. She has obtained various written permission from parents, such as consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The childminder has ensured that children are safeguarded by the safety measures that are in place throughout the premises at all times.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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):

- include clear information on sickness in the policy statement
- update written information available for 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