

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103627
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Jane Wakelen
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 1992. She lives with her family in a house in Rochester. 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 four children under five years on three days in the week and three children over five before and after school for various times and days. The family has seven chinchillas, one gerbil, two budgerigars, two guinea pigs and two rabbits.

The childminder occasionally attends the local carer and toddler group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are supported in developing a healthy lifestyle because the childminder has a good understanding about providing exercise and healthy options for snack and meal times. Children

enjoy opportunities to walk to the local park and to use the large play equipment, whilst benefiting from fresh air. They have occasional outings to local places of interest and visit a mother and toddler group where large equipment, such as a climbing frame is available.

Children learn the importance of good personal care routines, such as washing their hands before eating their snack and meals and after using the toilet. Children have opportunities to stroke the many pets at the childminder's home, but are reminded about the importance of hygiene procedures after stroking them. All children have individual hand towels, preventing the risk of cross infection. The childminder follows good hygiene procedures when changing children's nappies, such as using antibacterial wipes or spray and disposing of the nappy hygienically. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and obtains written permission from parents regarding seeking emergency medical treatment or advice in the event of an accident.

Children are given healthy options for snack time, such as fresh fruit and raisins and usually sit up at the table to promote table manners. However, children are unable to make choices about what snack to have as they are given a bowl with the fruit in. Younger children have their own drink containers with water in and older children can request the drink they would like including apple juice or sugar free squash. Children are unable to be fully independent as they are unable to fetch their own drinks or pour them out.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe, compact environment where they are able to access toys and resources from shelves and low cupboards. Older children are able to access alternative resources from cupboards out of reach of the younger children to ensure their safety. The childminder has a good understanding about ensuring the toys are clean and safe for children and regularly checks them when offering them to the children.

An informal risk assessment has been carried out in the home and measures put in place to ensure children's safety. For example, cupboard locks have been fitted in the kitchen, safety corners on child-height cupboards and stair gates are put in place to prevent access to upstairs and occasionally the front room. Fire prevention methods are in place such as smoke alarms and the fire blanket in the kitchen. Children regularly practise evacuating the home and this is recorded in writing, fully promoting children's understanding and safety. A fire extinguisher is available and a carbon monoxide alarm is in situ to provide a security measure, protecting children's welfare. A safe procedure for the safe arrival and collection of children is in place, with a password system available in the event of an emergency. Children are taken on outings and reminded about keeping themselves safe, for example wearing the wrist reins or holding onto the buggy. Parents give written consent to the childminder regarding their children travelling in the car or going on outings, fully supporting children's well-being.

The childminder is aware of the appropriate procedures to protect children and understands the signs and symptoms to be aware of. She has implemented a written policy for parents to make them aware of her responsibility and has attended training in the past. The childminder is presently updating her information to ensure all phone numbers for the outside agencies are available and correct.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's clear understanding of child development, particularly regarding pre-school children. They are encouraged to participate in the activity and resources provided and are offered a choice to help their decision making. Children receive the full attention of the childminder and are confident to approach her for help, such as untangling the fishing rods. Children enjoy a relaxed atmosphere, where their individual characters are well known and their needs met. For example, one child wanted to play a game, whilst the younger child needed a cuddle. All children are made to feel included and are helped to gain confidence and build their self esteem through praise and encouragement from the childminder. She laughs with the children and helps their language development, repeating words they are unsure of or asking open questions. She has a good awareness of children's interests and extends their language skills, such as naming all the fish in the fishing game, because the child has an interest in marine life. However, activities are not always planned to help extend children's learning in all areas of their development or to offer new experiences to involve their interests.

Children can access some resources independently and the childminder offers additional activities to engage their interest, such as painting. Children enjoy using large play equipment and are able to use the various equipment at the local park, whilst also being encouraged to observe the changes in their environment, such as colours of the leaves or new flowers growing. Children collect natural materials, such as leaves and twigs to make collage pictures supporting their understanding. They have good opportunities to learn about caring for animals and observe the different habits and lifestyles of the many pets the childminder has such as budgies, chinchillas and rabbits.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are promoted well. Children's own routines are recognised and implemented effectively to allow children to feel at ease and settle quickly into the childminder's care. The childminder responds positively to children's differences, promoting positive images within resources and discussing these with the children and answering any questions honestly. Children are able to extend their knowledge about different cultures from school to the childminder's home. She helps by offering different activities such as the cooking of noodles and eating with chopsticks for the Chinese New Year. Children's welfare and individual needs are met because the childminder obtains full information about their family and home circumstances. The childminder has some experience of caring for children with additional needs and works closely with the family and outside agencies to provide a programme of care to address these.

Children behave in a positive manner towards each other and are supported by the childminder's calm approach. Older children learn about acceptable behaviour through positive methods, such as praise and a reward system. They help write the house rules, supporting their understanding about right and wrong and take ownership for their behaviour. Children work towards targets that they set with the childminder and each other. They receive stars for achieving these and are then given a reward. Children learn about making relationships with each other and adults, building trust and reassurance with cuddles and hugs from the childminder.

Children benefit from good relationships between the parents and the childminder. Parents are kept well informed about their child's care through verbal communication and a daily diary, listing the child's sleeps, nappies, meals and activities or outings they have been doing that day. They receive copies of the policies and sign to say they have seen and read them, however, the complaints policy needs updating. Parents give written permission for aspects of care, such as travelling in the car, photographs and outings protecting children's well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a warm, cosy environment where they are made to feel welcome. The childminder ensures children are protected from un-vetted individuals by ensuring the children are with her at all times and implementing a visitors book. The childminder holds a recognised early years qualification which supports children's care and development. However, not all activities are extended to provide a challenge or meet children's individual interests, to ensure all areas of learning are fully addressed. All documentation is in place and made available to parents. They receive copies of the written policies and complete the necessary records to keep the childminder informed and support children's welfare. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations from the previous report. To ensure medication records meet requirements, update training requirements to include first aid and child protection and provide an emergency evacuation plan and practise with the children. Medication records have been updated and implemented supporting children's well-being. All children practise the fire drill on a regular basis and the drill is in writing on the wall. The childminder has attended first aid training and child protection. The first aid is due to be renewed in June this year.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of 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):

- extend opportunities to develop children's independence skills at snack time
- further develop activities that meet children's interests, to promote their development in all areas of learning
- update the complaints policy and procedure to ensure the information is correct

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