

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	121057
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Louise, Caroline Bonney

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 first registered in 2000. She lives with her partner and senior school-aged son in Mychett. The ground floor of the house is used for minding. Sleeps are taken in a cosy area in the hall and conservatory. A secure rear garden is available for outside play. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder currently cares for seven children, of which two attend after school only. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's equipment and the premises are clean and bright. Although floors are laminated, children play on soft and warm surfaces through the provision of rugs. The childminder

establishes good hygiene procedures. She changes babies nappies on a washable mat and wears disposable gloves to prevent the spread of contamination. Young children independently look after their own personal care. They ask for a tissue to wipe their nose on. They independently take themselves to the toilet and wash their hands afterwards, using their own individual towels kept on low pegs. They sit at the snack bar for sociable meals and younger children wear bibs to prevent spills on their clothes when eating. Children recognise and use their own cups. This prevents the spread of germs and children develop a clear understanding of good hygiene.

Children receive protection from illness and infection. The childminder shares her policy with parents, which prevents unwell children from attending so that illnesses are not spread. Children have their medical needs met through the childminder seeking information in advance about any medication to be administered. The childminder keeps her first aid training up-to-date and seeks parental consent for requesting emergency medical assistance. This ensures children receive appropriate medical support in case of any accidents.

Children have their dietary needs met through the childminder liaising closely with parents. Parents currently provide children's food with the childminder supplies occasional snacks, such as raisins, with the parents' agreement. The childminder ensures spare supplies are available should children be exceptionally hungry. The childminder is aware of the correct procedure for re-heating precooked food which prevents bacteria spreading. Children have frequent drinks with the childminder's encouragement. This ensures children have plenty to eat and drink during the day.

Young children follow their home routines around eating and sleeping and most have a travel cot available for their use. This ensures they have space to stretch and move freely when sleeping. A thermometer in the conservatory helps the childminder monitor the temperature for children sleeping there, with alternative sleeping space available if it is too hot.

Children walk to school daily and visit the park once a week to play on the climbing and swinging apparatus. This supports the children's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in premises that are safe and secure, indoors and out. They have clear boundaries for their activities through the placement of safety gates, which prevent their accessing the hall and kitchen. The childminder thoroughly risk assesses the children's activities and surroundings, and all hazards are minimised. Children frequently visit other childminders houses and parks that are known to have high standards of safety. This helps to prevent accidents. Parents receive information about emergency procedures and the childminders who provide emergency cover. These childminders are well-known to the children and to some of the parents, which provides excellent continuity.

Younger children safely choose their toys from a selection the childminder sets out for their use. She is always vigilant when children are playing together to ensure that babies only access appropriate toys. She sits with the children as they play, and uses her body to support babies as they learn to sit up, which prevents them from tipping and bumping themselves. Babies sleep nearby in the hall where the childminder can closely monitor them. This supports the children's safety very well.

Children develop excellent awareness of how to play safely. They practise the fire drill so that they know how to safely evacuate the premises in an emergency. Older children agree the rules when visiting parks, such as staying within a certain area, and collection procedures after school are very clear to prevent any confusion. They know to ask for support when accessing toys from the higher shelves to prevent any accidents. Younger children know to play carefully around the baby. The childminder gives children clear explanations that support their understanding of safety, such as not to put sunglasses in their mouth in case they fall and hurt themselves. They willingly tidy up to provide clear floor space in order to reduce tripping hazards. Children have suitable challenges. Babies develop control as the childminder supports them as they try to stand and they have space to crawl and roll as they become more mobile. Young children visit the park to use large apparatus and in good weather play in the garden with larger resources, such as wheeled toys. They learn to walk safely on the pavement, either holding onto the buggy or wearing reins. This helps them develop very good awareness of risk and how to manage it.

Children receive very good protection from possible abuse or neglect. The childminder attends up-dating training to ensure her procedures are appropriate and comply with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidance. Parents receive a copy of the child protection policy and share the record of existing injuries. This safeguards the children well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very well and appear quite at home in the caring and warm environment. They have trusting and mutually respectful relationships with the childminder, and babies and preschool children play very well alongside each other. Children are confident and talk and play freely, changing their activities according to where their interests lie. The childminder supports their independent choices by helping them set up their chosen activities and divides her time well between the children to ensure all have individual attention. She introduces new ideas as they play, such as tracing around their bodies or toys or making handprints with the paint-pens. Children are busily engaged at all times and find the resources stimulating. They very much enjoy interacting with the childminder and involve her in their play, although the childminder also gently encourages them to play without her some of the time to encourage their independence.

Babies play with toys placed around them where they can reach, and stretch and begin to crawl for those just out of reach. They practise control as they sit and stand with the childminder's support. They communicate their needs with sounds and gestures, which the childminder promptly responds to. They make connections as they press buttons and watch how the toys respond with chimneys that go up or flaps that open.

Preschool children talk confidently during their activities. They recognise colours and animals as they play with the farm. The childminder encourages them to recall friends that attend her provision and their first day at nursery. Children enjoy watching as babies find surprise toys, like the rattle the childminder and children hung up earlier. They show care and concern towards babies and spend time talking about what they are doing or what they see out of the window. This helps children develop close and caring relationships as they grow up together.

Children have good opportunities for socialising in larger groups. They visit other childminders each week and develop friendships with their children. They play in the park once a week or visit local shops. This widens their experience of their community.

The childminder is aware of the Birth to three matters framework, although she is not currently using this to further develop her provision for younger children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive good continuity of care due to the strong partnership the childminder establishes with parents. She seeks information about their needs through the completion of a daily diary which both parents and the childminder contribute to. This provides details about home routines, dietary and medical requirements. Parents all complete contracts and appropriate consent forms. They share the written policies and procedures and know the records kept about their children, which they sign when necessary. Through letters written parents show how they value the provision highly. They cite the gentle and calm approach of the childminder, her warm love and enthusiasm, as well as her flexible approach which supports the children well as they start nursery or school.

Children access resources such as books and play people that reflect social diversity. However, there are no resources to provide positive images of disability. Children freely select their activities from a wide range of resources which prevents stereotyping. They learn about their own customs as they celebrate birthdays, father's day and Christmas by making cards, decorations and gifts. The childminder liaises with parents for children who have English as an additional language to ensure their language development is progressing sufficiently well. This supports the early identification of any developmental difficulties so that support is sought quickly.

Children show a sense of belonging as they confidently play and interact with the childminder. They talk about playmates that will be arriving later in the day. Children have low pegs to hang their coats on and know where to find their own towel or cot. This helps the children feel at home. The childminder manages children's behaviour well and children are polite and thoughtful. Preschool children show care and concern towards babies. They say 'excuse me' if they wish to interrupt the childminder, and remember 'please' without prompting. The childminder relies on techniques such as consistency and distraction in managing children's behaviour, while older children discuss the rules in place. This helps children learn appropriate boundaries for their behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder organises the provision well. She provides safe space for the children to play in and the welcoming environment helps them quickly settle. Children receive good support during their activities as the childminder manages her time and ratios well. They know the routines around meals and sleeps which provide their day with rhythm. The childminder develops and effectively implements policies and procedures. Her records are well maintained and up-to-date. This supports the safety and welfare of the children.

Children benefit from the childminder working closely with a group of three other childminders. Together they plan activities, such as the Christmas party and weekly get-togethers. They identify future training needs, such as Food Hygiene and the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The childminder maintains membership with the National Childminding Association. This helps her keep abreast of changes in the field and to evaluate and develop her provision. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was recommended to improve documentation. She now has a written complaints procedure which includes Ofsted's contact number. This supports parents' awareness of how to make a complaint. The register shows full details of all the children on roll. This ensures there is an accurate daily record of the children attending the provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- develop the provision for younger children further through using materials such as the Birth to three matters framework
- provide resources which reflect positive images of disability.

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