

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125985
Inspection date	11 February 2008
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?

This childminder was registered in 1980. She lives with her husband and adult son. They live in a house in Ramsgate, Kent. The house is within walking distance of shops, schools and parks. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a downstairs toilet for the children. There is a fully enclosed garden area for outside play. The family has two pet birds.

The childminder is registered to mind six children at any one time and is currently minding four children. She attends local childminding groups and other activity groups on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is an active member of the Thanet Childminders' Association.

The childminder attends short courses on an ongoing basis and has completed the Introducing Childminding Practise (ICP) and both the Developing and Extending Childminding Practise, (DCP and ECP). She has also gained her NVQ Level III in Childcare and is registered as a specialist childminder with the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit because they are cared for in a clean and well maintained home where very good standards of hygiene are implemented throughout by the childminder. She teaches the children about good personal hygiene practices through discussion and modelling by the childminder. They understand that cleaning their hands prevents the spread of germs. Some of the children have allergies and the childminder respects parents' wishes as they do not want their children to wash their hands with soap and water but only use appropriate wipes. Children who do not have allergies use soap and water and parents provide individual towels for hand drying.

The childminder has relevant first aid training and deals effectively with accidents, keeping children healthy. Children's health is assured in an emergency situation because parents provide written consent for their child to receive emergency treatment. The childminder has a good understanding of young children's illnesses. She is nurturing and is aware of children's medical needs; careful records are kept regarding any long term illnesses. She works closely with parents so children are cared for appropriately. With parents' permission the childminder ensure children's health is maintained by attending clinic and other medical appointments.

Parents provide packed lunches for their children. Children sit together for meals, helping to promote their social skills and table manners. Younger children are learning to feed themselves which helps them develop their independence. Children learn about healthy eating because the childminder has implemented a healthy eating policy and provides healthy snacks. She provides an interesting variety of healthy snacks; some of which are grown in the garden during the growing season. Some of the food provided by parents are of high salt content. Children receive regular drinks to ensure they do not become thirsty or dehydrated.

All children receive lots of warmth and affection. The childminder uses Birth to Three Matters framework to support children's development so they gain strength and co-ordination. Children are taken out each day for fresh air, in the summer they play in the garden and go to the beach. Children go on outings to the park and play centres, where there is large play equipment which gives them plenty of opportunities to develop physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder's home is warm and child friendly; children have a space for their coats and shoes helping them to feel welcome. The space is organised well allowing room for the children to move freely and safely throughout the main areas used. Children help themselves to an excellent range of play provision, enabling them to make choices about what they play with. The childminder ensures equipment and play materials are extremely clean and well maintained, helping to keep children safe.

Formal risk assessments and daily checks are in place. As a result, children's safety is assured; the childminder is vigilant and removes risks and hazards within her home. Plug socket covers are fitted and dangerous substances and cleaning materials made inaccessible to children. There is a written evacuation plan with drawn plans of the ground floor; smoke alarms, fire blanket and dangerous gas deactivation equipment to contribute to children's safety in an emergency.

There are good procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. In an emergency passwords are used for extra protection. A non collection policy is in place to ensure children are safe at all times.

Very good procedures are in place for outings and parents' permissions are sought for outings and to transport children in a vehicle. All necessary documentation pertaining to transporting children is correct and available for parents to see. When children are on outings they wear bracelets containing the childminder's mobile telephone should they separate from the childminder. In addition children learn to keep themselves safe when they are away from the setting. For example, when they use the road the childminder teaches them about safe crossing. They know the boundaries and the rules of staying together. The childminder is aware of the need to protect children from the sun and obtains permission from parents to apply sun block to protect their delicate skin. When children are at home they are encouraged to tidy up so that they can play safely.

Children are very well safeguarded from harm because the childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures from attending training. In this way she ensures that her practice is underpinned by a good and up-to-date knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms. She has at hand the procedure to follow should she suspect a child in her care is at risk from abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are confident and secure in the care of the childminder because she is very much aware that all children are individuals. When children first join the setting the childminder finds out from parents their starting point and provides parents with individual folders to plot their progress. She recognises the importance of play in children's development and provides suitable activities to promote development in all areas. The activities are stimulating and interesting. As a result children are having fun and learning through play.

The childminder gives learning a very high priority each day and children benefit from her commitment to planning a suitable curriculum. She uses the six areas of learning and the Birth to three matters framework effectively to involve children and further their development. She uses her observations to plan children's next steps. The toys are presented so children can help themselves easily. The childminder has introduced 'toy cards', these are photographs of toys available to them. This helps children who are not yet able to express in language what toys they want to play with. There are written plans of the activities which are displayed on the wall for parents to see.

Children are developing well in their confidence and self-esteem because the childminder constantly praises and encourages them. Their achievements are valued and celebrated; the childminder tells them that they are clever. Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as role play and dressing up. They are having a lovely time being doctors and nurses practising their skills on the childminder as they pretend to treat her multiple injuries. The childminder listens to the sounds young children make, repeats their sounds and introduces new words to their vocabulary. The children have many opportunities for story time at local childcare centres and groups. They enjoy cuddling up to the childminder to read a book. This helps them develop listening skills and a love of books. Some children count confidently, even very young children are encouraged to count. For example, counting fingers as they have their hands cleaned, making different sounds to numbers. The childminder

regularly talks to the children about colours and shapes. As a result, children's mathematical development is promoted well.

Young children are involved in a wide variety of social activities, such as toddler groups and the local childminding group, so they meet other children and adults in a safe environment. Children who attend after school are able to relax or to do their homework at parents' request. In the holidays and after school, older children enjoy a wide variety of creative activities, such as making masks, drawing and outings. Children are extremely well supported by the childminder who sits and plays with them increasing their confidence as they work out how to play with equipment. Children's independence is encouraged in many ways, the childminder allows children to do things for themselves and offers help when they are not so competent. Children help at snack times by getting the plates and sharing them out. They have free choice of the toys and are also given choices at snack times. They are able to choose what drinks and snacks to have. This makes children feel confident and self-assured.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder offers a fully inclusive service where children's individual needs are respected and fully met. All children are treated as individuals and their achievements are valued. The children benefit from the childminder's open attitude towards equal opportunities and experience of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The childminder is able to adapt the activities to enable all children to take part. The childminder works closely with parents so that she can build on children's previous experience and knowledge. As a result, children have the opportunities to develop in all areas. The childminder works with outside agencies with parents' permission. She sometimes conducts research on childhood illnesses and on alternative cultures and beliefs. This benefits children enormously. There are good quality resources available to help children learn about other cultures and disabilities. Outings in the town and local amenities help children learn about the local community.

The childminder encourages the children to share, take turns and say "please" and "thank you". She is a positive role model and frequently praises children's behaviour and achievements, raising confidence and self-esteem. The childminder manages children's behaviour through distraction and simple explanations that are appropriate to the age and understanding of the child. The childminder encourages the children to tidy away before lunch. Some children enjoy the opportunities given for taking responsibility at lunch time to share out the plates. This involves children in what goes on around them and gaining in self-confidence.

Partnership with parents and the childminder is very good. All children benefit from consistency of care, due to childminder and parents working closely together to support their needs. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about her childminding service. She provides each parent with a childminding pack which includes an extensive range of policies. This includes the complaints procedure, however, this is out of date. Written information from parents, and informal discussion, helps to ensure the childminder is well informed about children's individual routines. The childminder is proactive in seeking feedback from parents and they are very satisfied with the service. Parents appreciate her efforts and describe the service as excellent, professional and good value for money.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of the National Standards and how to implement these effectively in practice. She is committed to on-going training and regularly attends training to update her knowledge and understanding of childcare. She has a childcare qualification and is registered with the local authority as a 'specialist childminder' providing emergency care. The childminder also works with the local authority to support new childminders.

Children benefit because the childminder is well organised and plans her day around the individual children's needs and routines allowing time for play, rest, eating and outings. She makes good use of space and resources within her home to create a relaxed and comfortable environment. As a result, children are happy and settled. She has a very good knowledge of their individual needs and abilities and uses this to help guide her planning.

The childminder keeps the required documentation and most of this is maintained to a good standard and includes all relevant detail. However, the complaints procedure and the log does not reflect the new regulation. The registration certificate is displayed for parents. The attendance register is accurate and shows that the childminder is within her registration. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the inspector made one recommendation to continue professional development. The childminder has continued to attend training to develop her knowledge in childcare. Resulting in very good outcomes for children.

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

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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):

- further develop the complaints policy to reflect new regulation and share this with 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