

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161174
Inspection date	18 December 2007
Inspector	Mandy Mooney
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 1993. She lives with her husband and three children in a five bedroom house in a quiet residential street close to Welling railway station. Minded children have use of the whole of the ground floor, which includes a large lounge/diner, a kitchen/breakfast room, a conservatory, a sitting room and the hallway. There is a fully enclosed, garden available for outdoor play activities.

The home setting has good transport links and is close to a number of local amenities including shops, parks and a library. Welling High street and Bexleyheath are both within walking distance of the property.

The childminder is registered to care for five children under eight years at any one time. There are currently two children on roll. She is part of the network of approved childminders and is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA)

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a very clean and organised environment. The childminder has a clear understanding about the importance of good hygiene practices and the home environment is clean, brought about by effective hygiene practices that protect children from illness and risks of cross infection, such as, washing toys and resources on a weekly basis, ensuring floors are cleaned every day, especially because the childminder has a dog, and organising the play space and toys effectively. Children follow appropriate personal hygiene routines, such as, regular hand washing. Adequate nappy changing routines mean that the potential for cross infection is minimised. Children's medical health is sufficiently protected. The childminder maintains a first aid certificate and a first aid box is easily accessible. A procedure to deal with medical emergencies is in place, however, written consent to acquire emergency treatment or advice in the absence of the parents is not in place and this could delay the process. Appropriate procedures are in place to record accidents, however, existing injuries are not recorded and this means a complete record is not maintained.

Children take part in a satisfactory range of physical activity which contributes to a healthy lifestyle, such as, daily walks to and from school, trips to the local pet shop and walks to the park to feed the ducks. They have access to a good selection of resources to support their development in the garden, although these are currently stored away for the Winter. Children benefit from a balanced diet that meets their nutritional needs, they are given regular meals, drinks and snacks that are in adequate quantities for their needs. Most children are provided with their food from home, however, parents are happy for the children to share the childminder's home cooked meals, such as chilli con carne and curry. Children have regular drinks and all have their own cups. They learn about the benefits of eating healthily because the childminder reinforces these messages in conversation.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a warm and welcoming home environment. Children are well settled and are made to feel comfortable in the organised lounge room. Toilet facilities are located on the ground floor and as the lounge door is left open, children can access the toilet independently. Appropriate sleep facilities are provided for children, babies can sleep on the floor with large cushions and there is also a travel cot available and older children use the sofa to rest or sleep. Children have access to a good range of quality play materials that are in good condition. Furniture, equipment and toys are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. Toys are bought from reputable outlets to ensure safety requirements are complied with.

Children are well protected from risk of accidental injury both in the setting and on outings, because the childminder identifies and reduces hazards, such as, completing a daily visual check of the areas used, ensuring any potentially dangerous items are inaccessible and confirming the identification of all visitors. Furthermore, public liability insurance to cover the childminding service is maintained. Good fire safety precautions are in place. This includes, having a fire inspection of the premises by the local fire authority and any recommendations completed, smoke alarms in all rooms, two fire extinguishers in the home and a carbon monoxide detector in place. Furthermore, the childminder has devised a fire evacuation procedure which is practised

with some children to ensure it is effective. Children learn to keep themselves safe whilst outdoors, for example, even the youngest children learn to cross the road safely and know they must hold hands when crossing the road and look both ways for cars.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of what to do if she is worried about a child and complies with local safeguarding children guidelines, however, she does not have the up-to-date guidance for safeguarding children and this could result in a delay in making a referral. Furthermore, existing injuries are not recorded and this means that a potential child protection issue could be missed, meaning a child's safety is compromised.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop good relationships with the childminder, who is responsive to their individual needs and ensures that their welfare is promoted. Children are very settled, playing on the floor with the childminder who skilfully encourages them to interact with each other during play. Children enjoy a variety of play activities and opportunities to meet their all round developmental needs and to offer lots of fun. This includes, playing with musical instruments and singing along to favourite songs, cooking activities and going out on regular outings locally and further a field. The childminder is skilled at both reassuring children when they are upset, offering cuddles and also encouraging early communication skills as she encourages children to respond with open ended questions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are included and are encouraged to have a positive view of the wider community. The childminder endeavours to ensure that all children's individual needs are met, this includes discussing children's needs fully with parents and getting to know them before they are left in her care. Children get the opportunity to learn about themselves and others through visits to various places of interest, where they have the opportunity to socialise with people from different cultures and backgrounds. Children access a range of toys and resources to reflect different cultures and the childminder uses conversation to extend children's understanding in this area. However, children have too few opportunities to enhance their awareness of people with disabilities.

The childminder is aware that some children have specific needs and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting, in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties. The childminder has attended several training workshops on specific needs, such as, dyslexia and dyspraxia and this gives her a greater awareness of the needs of children with a disability and/or learning difficulty, although she has not minded a child with such needs.

Children respond to childminder's consistent calm approach to managing behaviour and as a result children behave well. Strategies such as, 'time out' and explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable are applied and children know the rules and boundaries, this minimises unwanted behaviour.

The childminder continues to develop effective working relationships with parents, this includes having a contact book for a two way exchange of information. The childminder provides a

portfolio of information for parents and this includes certificates of training attended and brief policies and procedures relating to the service. This includes information on how a parent can raise a complaint, however, the childminder does not have an understanding of her responsibility to investigate complaints relating to the National Standards and the requirement to maintain a complaint log. This is a breach of regulation, however, the childminder demonstrates a positive attitude to improving this area and updating her knowledge of her responsibility to investigate complaints and to maintain a complaint log.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by an experienced and motivated childminder who keeps herself up-to-date with advancements in childcare by attending relevant training workshops, such as, food hygiene awareness, first aid and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) training. Being a part of a childminding network enables her to share good practice with other providers and this is reflected in the care offered to the children. Space and resources are organised to meet the children's needs and children are comfortable within the setting. Ratios are met and this is reflected in the accurate recording in the attendance records. Most required records are in place, with the exception of a complaint log, and these are stored in a confidential manner. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

One recommendation for good practice was raised at the last inspection, this was to update all policies and procedures. The childminder has a selection of brief policies in place, these are reflective of the National Standards.

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 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):

- obtain written consent from parents to acquire emergency medical treatment or advice for children

- ensure full information relating to the recording of existing injuries is kept and ensure information in place relating to safeguarding children is current
- develop awareness of responsibility in regards to investigating complaints and maintain a complaint log

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