

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY224805
Inspection date 10 January 2008
Inspector Cilla Rachel Mullane

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 was registered in 2002. She lives with her husband and two children in a house in a residential area of Canterbury. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder's husband assists with childminding on a full time basis, and her sister-in-law assists occasionally.

When working with an assistant the childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 10 children at any one time, and is currently minding 19 children, some aged over eight years, on a part time basis. The childminder provides overnight care. She and her assistant walk and drive to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family have two dogs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children would be cared for appropriately in an emergency, because the childminder keeps her first aid qualification up to date. Children are further protected because accident and medication

records are kept to a satisfactory standard. The childminder cleans her hands regularly with antibacterial gel, which helps to protect children from the spread of infection, but neither she or her assistant use disposable gloves for nappy changing, which has the potential to encourage the spread of germs between children. Children wash their hands with soap and water at appropriate times, such as before meals, but following messy activities they sometimes share a bowl of water for hand washing, which again encourages the spread of infection.

The childminder has attended training regarding 'healthy eating for your family' so children benefit from the provision of nutritious snacks such as fruit and vegetables. Children's drinks are available on the side, so they can help themselves. Some children bring packed lunches, and their named boxes are appropriately stored in the fridge. However, children are not provided with plates and bowls from which to eat.

Children have opportunities to practise their gross motor skills during visits to parks and parent and toddler groups. They play in the garden in the fresh air in the summer, but not in the winter.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The indoor environment is welcoming for children, with small tables and chairs, their pictures displayed, and plenty of storage units from which they can select their favourite toys. Although the garden is separated into play areas for children of different ages, it is currently messy, and children are not benefiting from playing outdoors. Toys and equipment are in good supply: children can draw at the easel, play with the dolls' house, and select trains and construction resources from trays and boxes.

Children are safe within the childminder's home. The dogs are kept behind a safely gate during childminding hours and children are always within sight and sound of the childminder and her assistant. In addition, sensible procedures help to keep children safe, for example, they are strapped into high chairs. The childminder has made information cards for most of the children, so that contact details are readily available on outings.

The childminder has been proactive in updating her training regarding the protection of children, and so she has the knowledge to enable her to safeguard the children in her care. However, her safeguarding children policy and procedure are basic, and do not thoroughly reflect local current guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder and her assistant interact warmly with minded children, and provide a calm atmosphere for the children. They enjoy a variety of activities both inside the house, and on outings and trips to parent and toddler groups. During free play children choose to play with the variety of resources available, and in addition the childminder leads creative activities, and stories and singing. For example, all children join in making a bus with their faces in the windows, and they sit in a group to sing songs using interesting props from a 'song bag'. They make mini gardens for dinosaurs and grow plants. There are frequent outings to childminders' groups and parent and toddler groups, so children meet other adults and children in safe surroundings. Also at these sessions they have opportunities to take part in a wide range of enjoyable activities: photographs show children being creative, enjoying a variety of 'messy play' experiences, and using large equipment such as a parachute.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder is assisted by her husband on a full time basis, so children benefit from seeing a male role model in a caring role. All children are helped to join in all the activities equally. Some resources, such as craft paper in different colour skin tones, help children to learn about diversity in society.

The childminder and her assistant are kind and caring towards the children, and encourage good behaviour with praise and encouragement. However, sometimes expectations of small children are too high, for example, when small children are asked to sit still or stop running around.

Parents' references show that they are happy with the childminding service offered. They are pleased with the range of activities on offer, and the welcoming environment. The childminder respects parents' wishes for their children, for example, enabling children to sleep at times requested by parents. She records nappy changes and sleep times daily, so that parents are informed. The childminder discusses children's activities with parents, and further involves them by compiling books with photographs of their children's activities and achievements. Information about how to complain about the childminding, if necessary, is appropriately made available to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

The childminder is assisted by her husband on a full time basis. so children receive a good amount of attention. She regularly updates her knowledge of childcare issues by attending short courses, which enhances the childcare. For example, she has learnt about treasure baskets and the Birth to three matters framework.

The documentation required for the smooth running of the childminding provision is poorly organised and of inconsistent quality. For example, parents' written permission to take the children on outings is not obtained for all the children. However, all children have record form with emergency contacts. The record of attendance appropriately includes when the childminder's assistant is present.

The childminder is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of her childminding service, and has an action plan in place for improvement: this includes undertaking food hygiene training, enrolling her assistant on training courses, and updating resources such as play-food.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the childminder improve the information given to parents regarding making a complaint. There is now satisfactory information available, and a record of complaints is kept.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety and National Standard 7: Health. Concerns were

raised regarding ratios not being met, the supervision of children and hygiene procedures for nappy changing.

An unannounced visit was carried out. The inspector found the provider was not meeting the requirements of National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 2: Organisation, and National Standard 6: Safety. As a result a reminder letter was sent in respect of a breach of conditions of registration and two actions were raised under National Standard 2 and National Standard 6. A response was received from the provider and Ofsted was satisfied that the National Standards were being met. No further action was taken, and the childminder remains qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure hand washing and nappy changing routines effectively limit the spread of infection
- develop the use of the garden for outside play throughout the year
- update safeguarding children policy to reflect current local guidance
- ensure that behaviour management strategies are age-appropriate
- ensure that all documentation is complete and organised.

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