

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY246654
Inspection date	03 April 2008
Inspector	Deborah Jane Starr

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 2003. She lives with her husband and two adult sons in Boughton under Blean, near Faversham, Kent. The ground floor of the house is used for childminding. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently caring for four minded children in total. Of these, two children are under five years, and two children are aged between five and under eight years.

The childminder takes children to and collects from local schools and nurseries. She takes children to the local library, shops and local places of interest.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through well-established, good hygiene routines. Policies and procedures such as the exclusion of children when unwell prevent the spread of illness. Use of

individual paper towels after hand washing at appropriate times and regular inoculation of the family pet prevents the risk of cross infection. The childminder holds a valid paediatric first aid certificate and children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident within the home. However, she has not obtained written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice and/or treatment. Consequently, children's health is not fully assured. Appropriate systems are in place for the recording of accidents and medication given. The childminder is also in breach of regulations as she does not obtain written parental permission prior to administering medication.

Children participate in a varied range of activities that contribute to their physical health and development. Regular visits to local parks and use of equipment in the back garden offer opportunities for children to develop control of their bodies. Children develop balance and coordination using swings, a space hopper, balance beams, climbing frames and a trampoline. An assortment of balls and bats develop throwing and kicking skills. Action rhymes such as the 'Wheels on the bus' promote young children's coordination further. Children sleep and rest comfortably when tired on the sofa when required.

Children develop an understanding of a balanced diet through daily snacks of fruit and biscuits accompanied with a cup of warm tea. Children help themselves to drinks of water from easily accessible individual bottles at other times throughout the day. Children's dietary needs, including the appropriate contents of lunch boxes that are provided by parents and stored appropriately in the fridge, are discussed with parents and taken account of.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder organises her home effectively to accommodate children's play. Her use of space and safety equipment ensures children move safely and independently around the ground floor of her home. For instance, stair gates prevent unsupervised access to stairs, a fireguard is secured to the wall and plug sockets are covered. Daily visual checks ensure hazards are checked and appropriate actions taken to minimise risks, such as cupboard locks. Children play with and use a varied range of safe and developmentally appropriate, good quality toys and equipment that meets their needs. Children's personal safety is promoted within the home and when on outings. Children are reminded to use scissors safely, are encouraged not to run in the home and not to jump from the bottom of the stairs. Children practise the clear evacuation plan and understand the importance of the regularly checked smoke detectors. Children are strapped into the buggy on outings and hold onto the buggy or the childminder's hand, whilst also wearing reins or a wrist strap as appropriate. Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of road safety when walking around the local village. Young children play within close proximity of the childminder when in the park, whilst older children remain within agreed boundaries within sight. Discussion about contact with unfamiliar animals, stranger danger and the picking up of objects from the ground promotes children's understanding further.

Appropriate documentation and policies and procedures that safeguard children's welfare are in place, such as, the collection of children by authorised persons. The childminder's secure knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and of the local reporting procedures protect children from harm. Discussion at the start of the arrangement ensures parents are informed of these responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play contentedly at the childminder's. They happily play together and adapt their games so that all children present are able to join in; for example, when playing with the train track. The childminder has a secure understanding of child development and demonstrates this through her understanding of how everyday activities and resources support children's development. The childminder encourages children to improvise with resources. For instance, children throw celebratory cards and attempt to land them on top of each other. They take turns, count their winnings and support younger children to persevere and achieve success. The childminder asks appropriate questions and provides props to support children's play. However, does not use what she knows about the children to consider how activities promote their next steps in development. Children enjoy re-creating their ideas, they manipulate paper into aeroplanes and cards and colour them in, using chalks, crayons and pen. They eagerly share their skills with others, making an array of planes for everyone present. Children are secure within the childminder's home, confidently approaching the visiting inspector and chatting freely with her. Children enthusiastically participate in imaginative play, using props to develop their ideas. For instance, they make papier-mâché models, sit in boxes pretending they are boats and wear small blankets and make masks with the childminder's assistance to become super heroes. Children enjoy each other's company, spontaneously playing 'I Spy', linking letter sounds and words whilst waiting for their snack.

Frequent walks around the village offer opportunities to explore and observe nature and extend children's experiences. Visits to the library, local shops and visitor farms, promote children's understanding of their local community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Regular discussion with parents ensures children's individual needs are appropriately identified and thoughtfully met. Comforters from home and appropriate settling-in procedures promotes children's sense of security. The well-considered use of focused story books helps to alleviate children's anxieties about social situations. Displays of children's own work promotes a sense of belonging. Resources such as doll's, books and small world play reflect positive images of ethnicity, culture and disability. Children participate in occasional activities that promote a positive attitude towards others and an awareness of difference, such as, food tasting, imaginative play using traditional dress and discussion about social experiences that is enhanced by the use of reference books.

The childminder balances the needs of the children in her care well. Her frequent role modelling of respectful behaviour, alongside a clear, calm and consistent approach to behaviour management, helps children understand what is expected of them. Children's behaviour is good. Frequent praise and encouragement promotes children's self-esteem; they beam with delight when praised by the childminder.

Children benefit from positive relationship between their parents and the childminder. Parents value her flexibility and willingness to meet their children's needs. Parents are welcomed into the home and informed of the childminder's practice and most of her policies and procedures through discussion and the display of some documentation. Parents are informed of procedures should they wish to make a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed and at ease within the childminder's home. The setting out of toys at floor level and access to regularly rotated organised storage containers enables children to make independent choices. The organisation of the ground floor of her home gives children space to move safely and independently. Child sized tables and chairs ensures children sit comfortably when eating their snack and lunch. A flexible approach to the day ensures children's individual needs are met; for example, rest during the day and the collection of children from school. Forward planning ensures that children's needs are met in the case of an emergency by the identification of an alternative minder known to the children.

Most appropriate documentation is in place. It promotes children's well-being, shared with parents and maintained confidentially and securely. The childminder has a secure understanding of the National Standards overall. For example, she safeguards children within her home by ensuring that appropriate checks are undertaken on all persons aged 16 years and over living on the premises. However, she is in breach of one regulation by not obtaining written parental permission prior to administering medication.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was requested to make the following improvements. To keep a record of accidents which happen in the children's own homes. To request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice and/or treatment and for taking children on outings.

These recommendations have been considered and some steps taken to improve the provision. Records now include all accidents outside of the childminder's home prior to children's arrival and written parental permission is in place for outings. Therefore, children's safety and some aspects of health are promoted. However, written parental permission for emergency medical advice and/or treatment is not obtained and remains an issue.

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 parental permission prior to administering medication
- obtain written parental permission to seek any necessary emergency advice or treatment at the time of placement
- use what you know about children to plan for their next steps in development
- offer regular meaningful activities that promotes children's awareness of the diversity of the wider world.

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