

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284851
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
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 2004. She lives with her husband who assists her with childminding, and three children aged 13, 10 and three in Cliftonville, Kent. All areas of the property are used for childminding apart for the conservatory. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding four children on a flexible basis. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local parent and toddler groups.

The family has a cat and a hamster.

The childminder has experience as a residential social worker, and has attended many short courses related to childcare. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean home where there are effective systems to reduce the risk of cross infection. Children learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine; for example, children wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before meals. In addition, the childminder discusses using soap and washing it off again. There is liquid soap and individual towels so that children do not share towels to help prevent the spread of infection. A sick child statement informs parents that children need to stay at home if they are contagious to minimise the spread of germs. Detailed accident and medication records help the childminder to act in the best interest of children if they have an accident or become ill. However, the childminder's first aid certificate is not current to ensure she has the most up to date information to respond to accidents or illnesses. However, she has sought parental permission for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment if an accident is serious.

Children enjoy garden play, there is a range of outdoor toys to enable children to develop control of their bodies as they push, scoot or ride on toys, they also enjoy bouncing on the trampoline. Children enjoy outings to the local park, library, beach and swimming pool for their physical development. In addition, there is plenty of space in the home for children to move freely. The childminder or parents provide the food. The childminder has developed a comprehensive healthy eating policy which is shared with parents. She has also developed a sample menu which shows that children receive a healthy and nutritious diet. As a result, children are well nourished in her care. Children's cups are readily available so they can help themselves to drinks whenever they are thirsty, this ensures they remain hydrated. Children's individual schedules are respected by the childminder and children can sleep when they wish. This promotes children's physical well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in the childminder's home as she has undertaken informal risk assessments; for example, she ensures her own children's toys are tidied away before the minded children arrive and she keeps the exits locked. As a result, the premises are safe and secure for the children cared for. Toys are safe, clean and well maintained, enabling children to play safely. Children are learning about safety as the childminder discusses safety with the children; for example; as they played with the bricks they discussed if it was safe for the 'man' to be on the roof. The childminder safeguards and promotes the children's welfare as there are effective procedures for their safe arrival and collection and the childminder knows the recommendations for sleeping babies so they are put down to sleep appropriately.

She knows how to safeguard the children in her care as she has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection. There is an evacuation plan and the childminder has smoke alarms, a fire blanket and extinguisher and an escape window to contribute to children's safety should there be a fire. She has discussed evacuation with the older children so they know what to do should there be a fire; however, it has not yet been practised. The childminder has parental permission for transporting children in a vehicle and for taking them on outings. She has an outings procedure which includes measures to keep children safe; for example, when they are going out children are taken in the pushchair to the car while it is unlocked and loaded so they remain safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident with the childminder; for example, a child helped show the inspector around the home, secure beside the childminder. Children have a range of toys and equipment that they can independently select from, however, they can not reach a few of the resources and have to ask. However, children's independence is promoted as they are encouraged to help to pick up the toys, 'it's cleaning up time,' a child said. The childminder caters for the differences in the ages and stages of the children's development. She observes what children like to do and provides a range of resources. Children's language is promoted as the childminder has conversations about things that are familiar to them; for example, they discuss the children's play school. Children become social as they meet other children at toddler groups and in soft play areas. The childminder asks many open-ended questions to make children think; for example, 'How would you like your banana?' Books are readily accessible so that children learn how a book works as they turn the pages over. Their language is fostered as they sing familiar songs; for example, 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' and 'Twinkle Twinkle'.

Mathematical thinking is promoted as the childminder uses positional language as she talks to the children. They also have opportunities to complete various puzzles, working out where pieces go. There are a range of 'cause and effect' toys readily accessible for children to investigate to find out how things work. Children use their imaginations as they role play. There are a range of toys and dressing up clothes enabling children to pretend as they imitate the things that go on around them; for example, as they push the supermarket trolley. A range of craft materials are available to encourage the children's creativity such as glue and paint. Younger children enjoy finger painting and older children enjoy planned activities such as making ginger bread. Children enjoy the opportunity to find things to explore; for example, shells from the beach. Activities such as play dough and small manipulative toys promote children's small muscle development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well in the childminder's care as there is a settling in routine; for example, children begin with short visits and favourite toys or toys that bring comfort are encouraged. The childminder also reminds the other children in her care to be kind to new children and each other. Children enjoy the childminder's company and have developed warm, close and secure relationships with her and readily approach her to play. The childminder has set boundaries that the children understand and appropriate behaviour is encouraged with praise and positive reinforcement which promotes the children's self-esteem. If children exhibit inappropriate behaviour the childminder uses redirection or distraction. As a result, children are well behaved in her care.

Children learn about the local community as they visit the library, beach, parks and local places of interest; for example, Jungle Jims, Wingham Bird Park and Farming World. Children are taught to have positive images of differences as the childminder is a positive role model promoting acceptance. She has a range of good quality books and toys that support this and helps to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Children's record forms detail religion and any special requirements to enable the childminder to cater for their individual needs. The childminder's home is open to all children if she is able to meet their needs.

Children's routines are respected and the childminder shares information with the parents daily both verbally and by using a contact book, this provides continuity of care. There are comprehensive policies that inform parents of the childminder's service. In addition, parent's written permission has been sought for outings, photographs, observation, transporting children in a vehicle and to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Contracts are in place outlining business details to ensure that the childminder is providing the care parents wish. The childminder has an up-to-date complaints procedure that she shares with parents which details the requirement for her to keep a summary of any complaints she receives. Parents have provided superb references for the childminder expressing their immense satisfaction and appreciation for her work.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She uses her space well and children feel at home and are confident to play. A written daily schedule is available for the parents and the routine is organised to include a range of activities including play times, meals, outings and rest times. Children are able to move freely and safely in the childminder's home. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children are maintained and stored securely. The attendance register shows that the childminder complies with conditions of numbers and a visitors book is used to show any visitors to the property. The certificate of registration is displayed for the parents' information. All adults living on the premises have current checks to show that they are suitable to be around children. The childminder has paperwork organised including public liability and business insurance on her car. She has a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), level 4 in management, as she previously worked as a manager in a children's home. She is committed to continuously updating her knowledge and understanding and attends short courses as they become available. She is currently undertaking a Diploma in Home Based Childcare, NVQ, level 3. However, she has been unable to update her first aid certificate to keep it current.

Improvements since the last inspection

After the last inspection the childminder received two recommendations to improve practice. These were to ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice and to ensure that parents are provided with Ofsted's contact details.

These recommendations have both been addressed. As a result, outcomes for children are improved and parents have the most up-to-date information should they need to contact the regulator.

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):

- complete a recommended first aid course
- review the arrangement of the toys and equipment to further promote children's independent self selection.

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