



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 115669
Inspection date 16 January 2006
Inspector Justine George

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?

The childminder lives with her husband and two children, aged 18 and 15, in a three-bedroom, semi-detached house, in a residential area of Welling. The house is within walking distance of local shops, schools, pre-schools, parks and other local amenities, with good links to public transport.

The childminder has over 11 years experience of caring for children. She currently cares for four children. A child aged 21 months, for three days a week; a 4, a 6, and a 10-year-old before and after school, on most days.

Over night care is not provided.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children have access to a really clean and hygienic home. The bathroom areas are clean and provision of soap and fresh towels encourage the children to wash their hands and manage their own personal hygiene independently. Changing routines for the young children promote good hygiene. They are changed on a mat, which is cleaned as and when used. The childminder washes her hands after changing the children and she disposes of waste using nappy sacks and the outside bin. The children's privacy is also maintained, as she changes them away from others. Hygiene is further promoted, as there are good written procedures in place. If the children become unwell, the childminder contacts the parents. Unwell children are excluded from the setting, to minimise infection. The childminder is aware of the documentation needed when administering medication and, through discussion, written parental consent would be obtained. However, the childminder has not kept written consent for non-prescribed medicines, such as nappy creams.

The children benefit from the childminder's good knowledge of food hygiene. She has attended a food hygiene course and has experience of caring for children with specific dietary requirements. The childminder ensures such needs are met, by checking ingredients, or giving certain foods that the parents have provided. The children benefit from the good range of freshly cooked meals, such as spaghetti bolognese, chicken, roasts and cold lunches. The children have fresh fruit on a daily basis and sweet treats are kept to a minimum. The children sit at the table to eat and the young children use a high chair. They wash their hands before eating, to prevent the spread of germs. The children have regular drinks throughout the day, including water. They are often asked if they want a drink and are confident in asking. As a result, the children's nutritional health is well fostered.

The children have good opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They use the spacious garden to play activities and use resources to promote large motor skills. The children benefit from being taken on outings to local parks or farms, to further provide them with opportunities for exercise. The children are well protected against the sun. Cream is applied, hats are worn and the children play outside early in the morning, to avoid the strong rays of the sun. The home provides the children with opportunities for rest and relaxation. Comfy sofas allow the children to relax. In alternative, the children can use the separate dining room to complete their homework in a quieter environment. The childminder is aware and follows the younger children's sleep routine. They sleep for a certain amount of time, as discussed with the parents, and have their dummy to ensure they are settled and comfortable. As a result, the children are well rested and their physical needs well met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are welcomed into a safe, warm and welcoming environment. The childminder is friendly and provides a home from home environment, where the children feel settled and secure. The children move around the home confidently and choose to watch television, or play with the selection of toys available at floor level, so that they can choose and select resources safely. All toys are in good condition and suitable for the children's age and stage of development.

Safety is promoted, as the children are supervised at all times. The parents have given their written consent for the children to be taken on outings and use the childminder's car or local transport. As a result, the children are cared for in line with their parents' wishes. On outings, the children use the buggy and stay close to the childminder. In larger open spaces, the children have more freedom to explore, but are still supervised. The older children are familiar with evacuation procedures, as the childminder takes time to tell them about what to do in the event of a fire and practices drills with them. Smoke detectors are in place as is the fire blanket. Safety is further promoted, as the childminder has devised a well written policy, outlining her responsibilities in providing a safe environment. She has obtained public liability insurance and business cover on her car insurance. She ensures sharp corners and plug sockets are covered and dangerous items or substances are inaccessible to the children. The use of safety gates prevents the children from going upstairs or into the kitchen, further promoting their safety. Should the children have any accidents, they are well protected, as the childminder has kept her first aid knowledge up-to-date. She is aware of her responsibilities in keeping records and ensuring the parents sign entries made.

The children's well being is well fostered, as the childminder is aware of all adults who will collect children and details are kept on their record forms. Should unfamiliar adults come to collect the children, the childminder would contact the parents to check with them, before letting the child go. Good arrangements have been made in the event of an emergency. The minded children would either be left with the childminder's husband, or another registered childminder. The parents are also aware, as a written policy is in place to inform them. The children's well being is further protected, as the childminder has good knowledge of possible signs and symptoms of child abuse. Local child protection guidelines have been obtained for the childminder to refer to. In addition, she has a written policy informing the parents of responsibilities in referring concerns to social services and Ofsted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children have access to a good range of resources, including telephones, small world equipment such as dolls, buggies, dressing up clothes, books, soft toys, musical instruments, wheeled toys, play dough and writing tools. The childminder plans outings for children who attend full days, or during school holidays. The children visit the local library. The younger children join in with the story telling

sessions and the older children like to use the computers or select their own books to look at. Outings to local parks, farms, the cinema, or meeting up with other childminders and their children, provide the children with extra stimulation. As a result, the children enjoy their time at the setting.

The children enjoy playing with dolls. The childminder supports and engages in their play by giving cuddles to the doll and encouraging the children to cuddle the doll, or put it into the buggy. The childminder provides the children with ideas of how to play. For example, when the telephone rings, the child puts his hands to his ear. The childminder uses the play telephone and pretends to have a conversation. The child takes the telephone and holds it to his ear to listen, showing that he is making connections with the world around him. The children make their own decisions in play, choosing toys that interest them, so that they develop their own play ideas. However, on occasions, the children's concentration is broken as the television is on in the background. As a result, the children go back and forth between rooms, rather than sustaining their interest in the chosen activity.

The children benefit, as the childminder has good knowledge of their routines, interests and needs, to help them progress in their development. Older children are supported with their homework of reading and spellings, and enjoy free play, allowing them to relax after the structure of the school day. Younger children are helped with their language development. They are given choices at snack time and the childminder asks open ended questions to encourage communication. However, the childminder is unfamiliar with Birth to three matters and opportunities to help the children become competent learners are not fully developed. The young children do not yet have opportunities to explore messy creative materials, which impacts on their sensory development. However, the childminder is planning to take the children to various groups to widen their experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents is good. Exchange of information about the children's well being takes place on a daily basis. The children benefit as the childminder takes time to speak with the parents when they arrive, to find out about how the children have been during the evening, or over the weekend. This helps her to plan the day, thinking about the needs of the children. For example, if the children have been up from early, they may need a longer sleep. The children benefit further, as the childminder requests and records information about their needs and the parents' contact details, ensuring they can be reached easily if needed. The parents are well informed of the childminder's practice as well written policies, outlining her responsibilities, are in place and shared. However, knowledge of complaints and the procedure needs updating, to reflect current practice.

The childminder has no direct experience of caring for children with special educational needs. She is aware of the various considerations to take into account, such as training, to ensure she could meet the child's needs, and the impact on other minded children. In caring for children with additional needs, the childminder would

liaise with parents to find out how to best support the child. If the childminder felt a child was not developing to his/her full potential, she would discuss her concerns with the parents and encourage them to seek further information from the school, or health care professionals.

Equal opportunities are promoted in the setting, as the children have equal access to the provisions on offer, which are suitable for both boys and girls. The children make independent choices about what they want to play with, allowing them to develop their own play ideas and prevent gender stereotyping. Toys reflect positive images of culture. Resources include small world play people, dolls and books. The children enjoy playing with the dolls, pushing them around in the buggy and giving them a cuddle, promoting a caring attitude towards others. The children have developed positive relationships with each other and towards the childminder. The younger children snuggle in and enjoy cuddles, demonstrating a sense of belonging and developing their self esteem and confidence. This is further developed as praise is regularly used to encourage positive behaviour. This is supported by a well written policy, which focuses on positive strategies and consistency. As a result, the children are well behaved, familiar with the boundaries in place and learn about rules. The children are encouraged to respect others by being kind and sharing the toys and equipment.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She has completed the required level of training and keeps her knowledge up-to-date by keeping materials to refer to, sent from Ofsted and the NCMA. The childminder has had relevant checks carried out to ensure her suitability. Other family members have also had required checks carried out. The childminder is aware to inform Ofsted when family members reach the age of 16. As a result, all adults are suitable to be in contact with the minded children. The childminder is aware that children are not to be left on their own with any other adults, at any time.

The childminder has most regulatory documentation in place. Details are kept, so parents can be contacted easily if necessary; records including accidents and children's details are available for inspection. However, written consent to administer all types of medication is not retained and daily attendance records are not up-to-date. The childminder ensures adult and child ratios are adhered to at all times and complies with her conditions of registration. The childminder has devised written policies and procedures, to ensure the efficient and safe management of the setting. She also shares them with the parents. As a result, the parents are fully informed of the childminder's responsibilities in caring for the children.

The children benefit from the way the childminder organises her time and space. They have comfortable surroundings to play in. They use the lounge area and the dining room for play and relaxation. The children are taken to and collected from school. The younger children spend time in the home or visit different places of interest. Once the children are collected from school, they have tea at the

childminder's home and spend time playing together and relaxing, until their parents arrive. As a result, the children are well cared for and their needs met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, a recommendation was raised for the childminder to ensure children's safety in the garden, by replacing the drain cover. This has been rectified.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints to Ofsted since 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 good. 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):

- further improve the outcomes for children under three in line with Birth to three matters
- ensure written parental consent to administer all types of medication is retained, and maintain a formal record of attendance

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk