

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 155027
Inspection date 07 August 2008
Inspector Beryl Witheridge

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 was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, one school aged and one pre-school aged, in Ashford, Kent. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding one child part time. The childminder walks and drives to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has a cat, a rabbit and some fish.

The childminder can support children with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children take part in experiences that help them to learn about good health issues. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands before they eat food, after going to the toilet and after touching the pets. Each child has their own flannel and towel, which are colour coded so as not to be mixed with the family towels. The childminder supports the children with appropriate language reminding them about germs. Antibacterial spray is used to ensure surfaces are hygienically clean and kitchen cloths are washed daily. Children with infectious conditions do not attend and procedures are in place should a child be taken ill while with the childminder. These procedures all help to prevent cross infection. Children's health needs are promoted through the up-to-date accident and medication records. Children enjoy opportunities to be active as they play in the garden with a range of resources and visit local places of interest. They also have opportunities to rest or play in comfortable surroundings. Younger children are able to keep to their own routines, such as sleep and meal times.

Children are encouraged to eat healthy foods and know that drinks of water, juice or milk are readily available. Healthy choices are offered regarding the food they eat and menus are provided to give parents ideas of what their children will be eating. These menus are differentiated into age groups from six to nine months and nine months to four years. They include options, such as cereals, yoghurt, fruit, pasta, cauliflower cheese, fish pie and vegetables, tuna pasta bake, sandwiches and nibbles, pizza and baked beans on toast. Parents of babies can bring their own food if they prefer. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's dietary needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being able to access play and learning opportunities within safe boundaries. For example, the childminder ensures external doors are locked to prevent children leaving the setting unaccompanied. Stair gates are available for when younger children become mobile. Children are supervised closely at all times and there is plenty of unobstructed space for them to move around and play. Toys and equipment are checked regularly, especially the baby toys, which are safe and appropriate for the children attending. Equipment, such as smoke detectors and a fire blanket helps to keep children safe and these are checked regularly to ensure they are well maintained. Children are given boundaries that are included in the house rules, which enable them to learn about their own personal safety, both inside and outside the home.

Children's welfare and safety is considered well, because effective measures are in place at all times. For example, the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and she has the current publications from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This provides her with the up-to-date information, which she shares with parents. The childminder has an emergency evacuation procedure in place, which she has practised, but not with all children and these have not been recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and comfortable in the childminder's home. They enjoy their time together playing and having fun and love playing and interacting with the childminder's own children. There is a lot of laughter and giggling. Children have the choice of a wide range of activities, which are all freely accessible. They are brought down on a daily basis allowing children to make decisions about what they would like to do, as well as taking part in planned activities. The childminder plans themes and outings in advance, especially during school holidays, but also ensures there are alternatives included should the weather be inclement. Toys and resources include board games, cars, garages, books, puzzles and soft baby toys. Outings include trips to parks, the zoo, museum, toddlers' world, music class, sensory room, outdoor play areas and woodland walks, Leeds Castle and the rare breeds centre. They join in with other childminders and their children at the park. Children enjoy social opportunities, they visit the Ray Allen centre, which provides lots of activities for children, such as ball pools and cookery; they are able to mix with other children and socialise. Outdoor experiences are promoted with a range of resources available, including seesaw, trampoline, climbing frame, sand, play kitchen, painting, bikes and cars. The children also have an area in the garden to plant their own seeds and plants. The childminder understands the developmental needs of children of all ages and has obtained the Birth to three matters framework, which she implements with the younger children. She always aims to ensure that the children have plenty of experiences available to extend their learning and to provide them with opportunities to play, learn and grow in suitable, stimulating surroundings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the childminder's home and all are treated with equal concern. Their individual needs are addressed and all children are included in all experiences. The childminder has experience of working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is willing to work closely with parents and outside agencies to provide the necessary care for individual children. Children demonstrate a sense of belonging as they make themselves at home and interact well with the childminder and her family. Toys and resources promote positive images of diversity and include small world activity figures, role play resources and books. The childminder plans and provides activities relating to various festivals throughout the year and obtains as much information as possible from the library and the internet to share with the children. This encourages children to learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and others, as well as explore concepts regarding the wider world. Outings to local places of interest help to develop children's awareness of the local environment.

Children are polite and well behaved. The childminder is a good role model, which helps the children to understand the expected behavioural boundaries. She encourages good manners and praises children regularly, which helps to increase their confidence and self-esteem. Positive behaviour management techniques promote children's welfare at all times. Children benefit from consistency of care, because the childminder works closely with parents to meet their needs. Questionnaires have been given to the parents and there are a multitude of thank you letters and cards from grateful and satisfied parents. Contact notes are shared and children's progress is recorded in these so that parents are aware of how their child is learning and developing. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. These are well presented and parents receive their own copies.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and settled within a welcoming, well organised environment. They feel secure and at ease with the childminder who provides good quality care. A range of documentation and records are in place, including daily attendance records, which show clear arrival and departure times for children. The registration certificate is clearly displayed and the required records are all stored confidentially and are readily available for inspection. The childminder has a positive attitude towards ensuring she meets best practice requirements. She is very pro-active towards training and updating her knowledge. She is aware of the changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage and acknowledges that she needs to improve her understanding of this. Children's welfare, care and learning are well promoted, due to the range of policies and procedures, which help to underpin the childminder's professional practice. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to ensure that the first aid box is stored in a place that is easily accessible in an emergency. This is now kept on the side in the kitchen during minding hours so that it can be accessed easily should the need arise..

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 complaint 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):

- practise the emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that all children are included and know how to protect themselves in an emergency
- improve knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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