



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126552
Inspection date	12 September 2005
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott

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 has been registered since 1995. She lives with her husband, a baby and three school aged children. They live in a house in Dartford, within walking distance of local amenities. The downstairs is used for childminding, but not the conservatory and garden.

The family have a large dog, hamster, cockatiel and fish.

The childminder walks to a local nursery to take and collect children. She takes children to the local library and to the local parks and play areas.

The childminder is registered to care for three children at any one time and is currently minding two children who attend on a part-time basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder effectively encourages a healthy lifestyle for children through good hygiene practises such as ensuring they regularly brush their teeth during the day. Children also begin to understand the importance of good personal hygiene through routines such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet.

The childminder ensures that children who are infectious do not attend, thus preventing the spread of contagious illnesses, and she holds information on infectious and notifiable diseases. Children's parents or relatives are contacted if they become ill or there is a serious accident, which ensures there is appropriate support in an emergency.

The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and is therefore able to administer first aid in the event of an accident. She would seek emergency treatment if this were needed, although she does not have written permission to do so. However, she has discussed this with parents.

The childminder provides regular food and drinks so that children are well nourished and healthy. Children are able to bring their own snacks and packed lunch which are stored safely, although the childminder is willing to provide snacks that are healthy such as toast, fruit, and cheese. Children sit at the table to eat and drink, this encourages them to develop healthy eating habits. Children can request, or help themselves to a drink whenever they need one and the childminder encourages them to have sufficient drinks by ensuring there are regular breaks. The childminder is aware of children's preferences and parental instructions and prepares drinks and food in accordance with these.

The childminder arranges for children to have daily physical outings for exercise, to local parks with new large play equipment, on local walks, and to the library for story times. This helps them understand the need for regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a range of sufficient, safe and suitable toys, resources and equipment. These include a buggy and double buggy, a travel cot, sterilizers, and a bouncy chair.

Children are able to independently access boxes of age appropriate toys which are varied and rotated to ensure their interest is stimulated. These include books,

drawing and crayoning, and imaginative toys such as dolls and cars. Toys are clearly displayed and visible so that children feel welcome when they enter the house.

Children play with toys and resources which are carefully selected to ensure they are suitable and these are checked and cleaned regularly, to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. The childminder reminds older children to ensure small parts are not left where they could be reached by babies or toddlers and she checks this.

Children feel well settled and secure due to the good organisation and use of space. They benefit from being able to move around safely and independently. They are aware of the rooms allocated for their use and cannot access any areas which are not suitable such as the storeroom.

Children are kept safe in the home. They enjoy their play in a safe and secure environment. A risk assessment of the house has been carried out informally and all the necessary steps have been taken to minimise risks.

Children do not have access to the garden but they have frequent outings in the locality and are kept safe when outside the home. This is accomplished through the use of written permissions for outings and transport, and access to a mobile phone with emergency contacts programmed in. The childminder has clear procedures for outings: she ensures children know why they need to stay close and hold hands. Children are supervised carefully while they play in parks and playgrounds and they learn about road safety and the importance of using crossings through planned activities and discussions.

The childminder has an understanding of child protection. She safeguards the welfare of children by being aware of the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met by the childminder who provides good support for children to progress and learn. For instance, when they reach the stage at which they begin to understand road safety she provides activities that develop their awareness of this issue.

Children have good relationships with the childminder and this enables them to feel happy, relaxed and confident. They feel valued because the childminder is warm and affectionate towards them and takes time to explain ideas and suggestions, or to talk to them. Children relate well to the childminder and other minded children and have close relationships with the baby who has been carefully introduced to them. Children experience good social opportunities through the opportunities they have to play with other children in the home as well as when they go out, such as to the story times at the library.

The childminder promotes the welfare of the children by spending time discussing

their individual needs with parents and then agreeing a flexible plan to enable children to progress in their development and learning. For example, the children are being made aware of road safety issues through the use of a story and activity book which is appropriate for their developmental stage.

Children have good opportunities provided by the childminder that enhance their emotional development, such as a gradual introduction to the new baby, and recognition of the baby's needs. This has enabled minded children to develop their understanding of babies, their needs and their care. Children relate well to the childminder, to the baby, and other children, and are beginning to form close relationships with them. They learn important social skills through these interactions.

Children show independence and make choices about the activities they become involved in, selecting and discussing choices with the childminder who encourages appropriate choices. For instance, when time is limited they are encouraged to do an activity that can be completed in the time left and this enables children to experience a sense of achievement.

Children enjoy good opportunities to develop their fine physical skills when they use their stickers to make pictures and they improve their dexterity by peeling these off the master sheet.

The childminder encourages children to become independent and gives good support and appropriate explanations. She encourages children to develop their understanding of time by talking about the 'play' clock displayed as they move hands and talk of 'getting up time,' and 'who comes home at 3.30?' The children are thus able to link times to significant routines and begin to understand and the concept of time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equality and opportunity and has a positive attitude towards diversity. Children are treated with respect and are made to feel good about themselves.

The children are encouraged to acknowledge differences as positive. The childminder recognises each child's abilities and interests and encourages them to talk about things that are important to them, such as their home, family celebrations, and birthdays. As a result, the childminder has a strong, positive relationship with minded children.

All children have access to and enjoy a range of resources that promote equality and reflect positive images of diversity such as dolls, books, and dressing up clothes, although none reflect disability.

The childminder is aware of how to obtain information and use the internet to research so that she could ensure that the special needs of any child she agreed to mind would be provided for. She is also aware of how to obtain advice and

equipment that may be needed should a child have a disability.

The childminder ensures children learn how to behave appropriately. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement and from some basic ground rules which are consistently maintained by the childminder. These include clear expectations, for instance, that children eat whilst sitting at the table. Appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, help children understand the consequences of their actions. The childminder manages children's behaviour in a positive way and ensures they are constructively occupied to enable them to experience recognition for their achievements and good behaviour.

The childminder develops a good partnership with parents so that she can effectively meet the needs of the children. She gathers all relevant information before children are placed in her care, for example, food likes and dislikes, medical conditions, activities enjoyed, and special comforters. This ensures children can be cared for appropriately. Parents are very satisfied with the service and most of the children have attended since they were babies which delivers continuity of care for them.

The welfare of the children is safeguarded as parents are kept fully informed of the childminder's practise, using care diaries, chats and feedback on the informal targets set to enable progression. A service statement is in place and shared with parents and all information is confidential.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder keeps herself well informed of current childcare practises by attending relevant courses and obtaining relevant information such as the Birth to Three Framework which she has begun to use. She has a current first aid certificate and displays certificates for insurance, registration, and first aid. A service statement with all the relevant details of her service is made available to parents and users of the service.

Children benefit from well-organised space, time and resources and they receive sufficient adult support to help them feel secure and confident. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All relevant and mandatory documentation is in place and well maintained, although the childminder has not recorded written consent for emergency advice or treatment. All records are confidential, safely stored and easily accessible.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made good progress in addressing the issues identified at the last inspection. She holds a valid certificate of paediatric first aid and has obtained information infectious diseases from the internet.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure consent to obtain emergency advice and treatment is recorded
- extend the resources reflecting diversity to include disabilities

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