



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126688
Inspection date	08 December 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 lives with her husband and two teenage sons in Wilmington, on the outskirts of Dartford. She is registered to provide care for six children under 8 years, and eight children attend part-time.

The premises are within walking distance of public transport, which offers a limited bus service, parks, schools and playgroups. Minded children have access to the ground floor of the premises only, which includes the lounge, large playroom/sleeping area, kitchen, toilet and garden.

The childminder takes children to the local parent and toddler group, and takes and collects them from the local playgroup.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder promotes the health of children successfully. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through routines such as, washing their hands after visiting the toilet, and before preparing and eating food, and older children remind younger ones. Children have independent access to the toilet which promotes their self-care skills.

The childminder keeps herself informed of current childcare practices by attending relevant courses. For example, she has a current first aid certificate. She is therefore able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident and is prepared to seek emergency treatment if needed and she has written permission to do so. These measures ensure appropriate support in an emergency.

The childminder provides frequent and regular drinks which children can help themselves to. Cooked meals can be provided, if parents wish, though children are able to bring their own snacks and packed lunches which are stored safely. The childminder is willing to supplement snacks with food that is healthy such as fruit, yogurt and cheese which ensures children are well nourished and healthy.

Children experience a good balance of energetic activity with times for quiet play and rest in a safe environment. Children have a variety of daily physical exercise, on outings to local parks, with large play equipment, and on local walks. 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 are encouraged to feel settled and secure through the good organisation and use of space. They benefit from being able to move around safely and independently. Children are aware of the rooms allocated for their use, and cannot access any areas which are not suitable such as the upstairs.

Toys, pictures and decorations are clearly displayed and visible so that children are made to feel welcome when they enter the house. Children benefit from a good range of safe and suitable toys, resources and equipment including imaginative toys, a sand pit, low chairs, and buggies. They are able to independently access a good variety of age appropriate toys which are varied; this ensures their interest is stimulated. These include books, soft toys, selections of puzzles, threading activities, games, imaginative toys and small world toys such as dolls and cars.

Children are kept safe in the home and enjoy their play in a safe, spacious and well

organised environment. All the necessary steps have been taken to minimise any risks. Children have access to the garden and they are kept safe through the use of supervision, and the secure fence around the rear garden. The childminder has clear procedures for outings; children use wrist reins and the harness on the buggy, so they cannot run into the road.

The childminder has a reasonable understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. She is aware of the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care and this safeguards the welfare of children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, relaxed and confident. They freely request help from the childminder and feel valued because the childminder is warm and affectionate towards them. For instance, the childminder cuddles children and sits them on her lap when they want attention.

Children's individual needs are met by the childminder who provides good support; for instance, when a child threads buttons, the childminder talks to her about the colours she has used and asks which is her favourite colour.

Children are encouraged to develop their independence by making choices about the activities they become involved in, selecting and discussing these with the childminder. For instance, they complete different puzzles and then choose to watch children's television.

Children have good opportunities to enhance their emotional development, as the childminder recognises their individual needs and talks about what they do 'really well'. They develop their self-esteem through these positive interactions. Children experience good social opportunities enabling them to attend a parent and toddler group and a soft play area in the locality.

Children enjoy and learn from a broad range of activities. They enjoy listening to stories read to them by the childminder. They access a range of equipment which develops their mathematical understanding, such as jigsaws and construction sets. Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as making tree decorations and dressing up. They learn from a range of activities that allow them to explore and investigate and have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through their walks and play in parks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Parents and children benefit from the individual information recorded which enables the childminder to meet their particular needs. For example, children's preferences, dietary and health needs are all taken into account by the childminder. Children enjoy talking about things that are important to them such as their home and what they

enjoy doing because of this. All children have access to a reasonable range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity such as, dolls, books and dressing up clothes, although none reflect disabilities.

The childminder has an fair understanding of caring for children with special needs. She is aware of how to obtain information, advice and equipment and is aware of children's developmental needs. This ensures that they can make good progress.

The childminder manages children's behaviour in an excellent way. Children are constructively occupied, and praise and recognition given by the childminder enables them to experience recognition for their achievements and promotes good behaviour.

The childminder develops a good partnership with parents. Children's welfare is promoted as she spends time discussing their individual needs with parents, agreeing a flexible plan to enable children to progress in their development and learning. Parents are invited into the home and made to feel welcome so that good information is exchanged between both parties. This ensures consistency of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from clearly defined and well-organised space in a large family home, and a good range of resources and toys. They receive good adult support to help them feel secure and confident. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

The childminder keeps herself informed of current childcare practices by attending relevant courses. For example, she has a current first aid certificate.

Children benefit from the childminder's use of the relevant and mandatory documentation. For example, she uses accident and medication records, a register, children's records, and has information on complaints should this be needed. Records are confidential, up to date and easily accessible.

The childminder ensures that people who have regular contact with children have been checked, although she has yet to obtain a check for one member of the household who recently became eligible.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has made some progress in addressing the actions and recommendation discussed at the last inspection.

She has ensured the fire precautions and the evacuation plan are appropriate should these be needed. The childminder ensures that she provides all the information about her service that is needed through discussion, so that parents do not need information about her service to be written.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints to report since the last inspection. 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):

- develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues
- obtain CRB checks for all household members

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