



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304226
Inspection date	18 January 2006
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson

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 March 2005. She is currently caring for two children aged under 8; one is aged 20 months, and the other is 6 years old. In addition, she cares for three children aged over 8 years.

The childminder lives in a three bed roomed semi-detached house, with her husband and two children aged 9 and 11 years, in Ewell, Surrey. The home is situated between Kingston and Epsom town centres, and is within walking distance of Ewell Court park and library, local shops and schools.

All areas of the home are available for childminding purposes; there is a spacious lounge, dining room, kitchen and ground floor cloakroom. There are three bedrooms and a family bathroom on the first floor, and a rear garden available for outdoor play.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and secure because the childminder is particularly conscientious and committed towards prioritising children's health and emotional needs. She plans the daily activities around the sleep needs of young children, so that their home routines are continued without disruption. In addition, a toddler group was specifically chosen for its location and opening times, so that the child's other weekly carers can take the child to a familiar environment. Toddlers therefore have opportunities to mix with groups of children; form friendships and learn the concept of sharing and caring. The childminder has given careful consideration to ensuring a gradual transition for new children settling with her. Procedures include lots of opportunities for parents and children to visit beforehand. As a result, when children are eventually left for their first full day, they are happy and settled in familiar surroundings. Relationships between the childminder and children are strong, warm, and affectionate.

The childminder has a current first aid certificate, which ensures that she is equipped to deal with any accidents or emergencies. She maintains a high standard of written records and documentation. For example, entries in the accident and administered medication book contain comprehensive detail, and information detailing children's individual health needs are all in place. Parents are secure in their knowledge about contagious diseases because the childminder has provided them with written guidance from the Department of Health. They know to ring the childminder first when children are slightly unwell, such as with a cough or a cold, and they understand the reasons for her 24 hour exclusion policy for infections. The childminder minimises the risk of cross contamination by practising high standards of hygiene; children have their own towels and linen; the home is clean; and nappy changing procedures are rigorously hygienic.

A very well balanced and nutritious daily diet, coupled with the childminders commitment to ensuring children get lots of fresh air, is laying the early foundations for a healthy lifestyle. The childminder provides wholesome breakfast cereals, plenty of fruit snacks, fresh vegetables and mostly un-processed meats. She provides younger children with a hot meal at lunchtime because she believes it is what they need, even though she cooks again in the afternoon for the older children after school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and well maintained home, whereby potential

hazards are mostly well identified and minimised. For example, windows are fitted with locks, and gas appliances are regularly checked by an engineer. Careful consideration has been given to the procedure for emergency evacuation in the event of a fire, and older children are clear about what to do. However, although the childminder has a fire blanket in the kitchen, it is not well placed to ensure easy access. The spacious and well equipped garden is secure, play equipment is in good condition, and the trampoline is fitted with the added protection of a purposefully designed safety net. It is possible though for children to access the kitchen, which contains some hazards, such as knives and a low level oven. However, good precautions are taken to protect children from harm whilst out and about within the community because the childminder conducts rigorous risk assessments. Young children are not allowed out of the buggy whilst they are waiting for the older children to come out of school, because of a very real possibility of her losing sight of them amongst all the other children. At other times though, such as when they visit the ducks in Ewell Court park, they are able to run freely, and when out shopping, she uses body restraints.

Toys and equipment are in good condition, varied in variety, and sufficient to meet the stage of development of both under 5's, and school aged children. For example, in the garden the children are able to play together, irrespective of age; they all enjoy using the trampoline; younger children manoeuvre pedal free ride-a-longs; older children use scooters and practice their basketball shots; and the sturdy new wooden summer house offers excellent play potential.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The childminder uses her sound knowledge of child development to provide a wide range of stimulating activities, which support and extend children's learning well. She understands the needs of school aged children after a busy day in a structured environment. She plans the week's activities carefully so that they can participate in a balance of age appropriate challenges, such as, cooking and craft making, and spending time in the company of younger children, where they learn tolerance. Toddlers are interested and motivated to explore and experiment and they have the confidence to use their imagination in make-believe play, such as when they pick up a toy telephone and initiate conversation with a very willing adult; the childminder. The week is full of varied activities, for example, trips to the swing park, duck pond, library, and a toddler group. Within the home they initiate, and play contentedly with the wide variety of toys. The childminders consistent flow of animated conversations and gestures keep children interested and contributes towards their developing language skills. She skilfully introduces new experiences and learning, such as, showing children how to create different patterns with a kaleidoscope, and counting out loud as toddlers build a tower with bricks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminders friendly, but professional approach to parents, and her sound knowledge of children's individual needs ensures consistency of care for children. Parents are able to spend time talking to her about their child's day when they arrive to collect them, which is additionally supported with a written record. All aspects of care provided have been agreed, and acknowledged with parents in writing, for example; consent to take children on outings; and accidents and medication records are signed by parents at the end of the day. However, because the childminder was unaware herself, parents are not familiar with the new procedure for 'how to make a complaint', and she has not devised an administrative recording procedure, as required by the new regulation. Whilst the childminder's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues is sound, she has not fully explained to parents, her regulatory responsibility; to record and report concerns.

The childminder makes good use of public facilities, which encourages children's awareness of the community, and natural environment. For example, the weekly visits to the library and toddler groups, shops and nature park. The childminders own knowledge and understanding of diversity, for example, other cultures, religions, and disability are limited, and she has few resources to support children's learning in this area. However, she has very recently become aware of a local toy library, and has diarised a visit for next week with the intention of loaning some suitable resources. She encourages non-stereotyped play, for example, the mixed group of school aged children all participate in cooking and craft activities. The childminder is committed to meeting children's individual needs, and whilst she has no experience of caring for children with special needs, her sound knowledge of child development and professional confidence, equips her well to recognise concerns or developmental delay, and take appropriate action.

Children behave well because the childminder is calm and consistent in her approach. She does have some clear house rules, which are occasionally challenged, but the childminder's regular use of praise, and 'sticker reward' system, motivates children to behave well most of the time. Younger children are developing high levels of self esteem as a result of the consistent praise, which is consistently backed up with clear examples. Parents are fully aware of the methods she uses to manage behaviour. They are clearly explained in a written procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy, confident and secure in the childminders organised and comfortable home, which is well resourced with accessible, good quality toys and equipment. She plans her day well to fit in with children's individual needs, in particular, the sleep routines of very young children, and the variety and timing of activities for older children.

Required records are comprehensively maintained and the childminder has devised many additional policies and procedures, all of which are shared with parents. She makes good use of the support and advice provided by the local early years advisors, and has made sure that requirements such as; completing the Introduction to

Childminding Practice (ICP); and first aid training, were completed within the given timescales. As a result, the childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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):

- improve safety by ensuring the fire blanket in the kitchen is easily accessible, and potential hazards, such as knives, are made inaccessible to children
- improve partnership with parents; update the information given to parents regarding the procedure for making a complaint, and make sure they understand the responsibilities of the childminder, in relation to child protection issues.

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