



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126088
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Freeda Wildon

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 1994. She lives with her partner and three children aged four, thirteen and eighteen in Broadstairs, 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 five children at any one time and is currently minding four children under eight on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local toddler group. The family has a guinea pig and birds.

The childminder has experience supporting children with special needs. She is a member of an approved childminding network but is not currently in receipt of funding for nursery education for three and four-year-olds.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where they learn about the importance of personal hygiene through effective routines introduced by the childminder. They wash their hands to prevent the spread of infection and use individual towels to dry their hands. This helps to prevent the spread of infection. Current first aid training, a sick child policy and accident and medicine records are all in place to help the childminder act in the best interest of children if they have an accident or become ill.

Children's dietary requirements and parents wishes are respected. Children learn about healthy foods because the childminder provides and teaches the children about healthy eating. Water and drinks are readily available, consequently, children are kept hydrated. Young children's individual sleep and rest times are respected by the childminder. As a result, they are able to sleep and eat according to their needs.

Physical play is a regular feature during the summer because children have access to a range of outdoor equipment. They regularly visit the play gym, childcare centres and the park where they make use of the physical play equipment. Older children walk to the childminder's home from school. These activities contribute to good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure because the childminder makes regular informal assessments. Children are able to move around freely and safely because the childminder has prepared the environment to allow them to do so. Children learn about keeping themselves safe when they are away from the setting, for example, they know the safety rules when walking to and from school. Toys are clean and well maintained, this enables children to play safely. There are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children, for example, the childminder has introduced a password system if a parent is not able to collect the child. This ensures the safe collection of children. The childminder's procedures for outings, emergency cover and her knowledge of child protection issues contributes to children's welfare and safety.

There is a written evacuation plan, smoke alarms, fire extinguisher and fire blanket to contribute to children's safety if they need to evacuate the home. Formal practise of fire safety has been established to keep children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are stimulated, happy and settled because they are cared for in an environment that allows them to experience a wide selection of meaningful activities appropriate for their stage of development. Children freely access resources and activities that effectively promote children's development in all areas. Children's work, displayed in scrapbooks, shows that they clearly enjoy taking part in creative activities such as painting, mask making, sewing, cooking and face painting. Activities are based on themes throughout the year, these include activities that reflect the four seasons. In the summer months children enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities which include garden play, visits to local attractions and visits to the park. The childminder has introduced story sacks, as a result, children are enjoying stories such as The Hungry Caterpillar. More able children visit the library.

Children are developing well in their own confidence and self-esteem. They are learning to be independent in personal care, for example, taking themselves to the toilet and helping to get themselves ready for outings. Children are interested and confidently speak to visitors and the childminder. They are confident because the childminder praises, encourages the children and values their achievements.

The childminder has a good knowledge of child development, this will be further enhanced by the further use of the Birth to three matters framework. The childminder knows the children well but has yet to establish a formal system of observations to identify children's next steps to development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are content, well behaved and settled in the childminder's care because the childminder helps children to have a sense of belonging. Children's photographs and Birthday dates are displayed at the entrance. A settling-in policy is practised and sharing information about home life helps children separate from their family. Children and parents are encouraged to visit before the placement begins. The children clearly enjoy the childminder's company and readily approach her to play.

Children's behaviour is generally good, they play well together, sharing and taking turns. The childminder makes expectations of behaviour clear, and gives reasons for her requests, ensuring children understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable. However, methods of sharing unacceptable behaviour with parents are not always positive. Constant praise and encouragement helps children develop a positive self-image.

Children have access to a range of activities and resources to promote a view of the world and to increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. On occasions children are involved in crafts related to festivals, such as Diwali and Eid to help them find out about other cultures. They have access to a range of books, games, play people that reflect positive images of different cultures and disability.

The childminder has experience caring for children with special needs and works in partnership with parents and other agencies to provide appropriate care.

Contracts are in place recording business arrangements and most appropriate parents' permissions are obtained, as a result, there is consistency between home and the childminder. Effective verbal and written communication from the childminder inform parents of the care that their children receive. A range of policies is available to parents, and the childminder has kept parents up to date with the recent changes in the complaint procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are secure and happy in the childminder's home because the childminder's routine includes quiet times, meal times, outings and play times. The childminder is accredited and is keen to further develop her knowledge. Ofsted records show that the childminder and her partner have undergone checks to establish suitability, her adult son is currently in the vetting process. The attendance register confirms that the childminder complies with the condition of her registration.

The registration certificate is displayed for parents. Most of the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and to promote the welfare and care of children is well maintained and stored securely. However, the childminder does not have prior written consent from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice should the need arise. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the childcare inspector made four recommendations. These were to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues; ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing; ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times; ensure that the emergency evacuation procedure is fully implemented and known and understood by all children. The childminder has implemented all of the above.

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):

- continue to develop knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under 3, through the use of the Birth to three framework
- review procedure for sharing unwanted behaviour with parents
- obtain prior written consent from parents for emergency treatment.

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