



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126858
Inspection date	28 March 2006
Inspector	Cilla Rachel Mullane

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1994. She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years. At present, she cares for ten children, all on a part time basis.

The childminder lives with her husband, and two adult children, and one teenage child. Her husband and the eldest two children occasionally assist with childminding.

They live in a house in Womanswold, Kent. The house is situated within easy distance of shops, schools and parks. The whole of the ground floor of the property is

used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The premises are very clean. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene through the routine, for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet, and after feeding the horse and other animals. The spread of infection is reduced through the implementation of a thorough policy regarding the exclusion of sick children, and positive actions introduced by the childminder, for example, the use of individual paper towels.

Children are well protected if they have an accident, because the childminder has kept her first aid qualification up to date. Accidents are few, and medication is rarely given, but books are prepared for recording such incidents. However, she does not have parents' written permission to seek emergency medical treatment. Consequently, she is unable to act according to parents' wishes.

Children regularly enjoy a good range of physical activities, during regular use of the large garden, that contribute to their health, and develop and challenge their physical skills.

Although parents provide food for children, the childminder monitors this, to ensure children receive a healthy and balanced diet. She helps to ensure children are fed healthily by discussing any concerns with parents. Plenty of drinks offered throughout the day help keep children hydrated. Children learn about healthy eating through discussion. For example, they talked about sugar and teeth when reading a story book.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a very child friendly environment, which is welcoming, with well-maintained toys and equipment on the floor which children enjoy, for example, a workbench and interesting books. Children have access to child sized table and chairs on which to play.

Children are kept safe in secure premises, where hazards are identified and eliminated. Children can play freely as immediate risks minimised. For example, a gate is used at the foot of the stairs, and there is a carbon monoxide detector. The childminder gives high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, a story prompted a discussion about holding hands with an adult when out, and learning the safe way to feed the horse. Children will be kept safe in case of fire, because the childminder has turned practicing drills into a game which the children request and enjoy.

The childminder has researched child protection procedures, and has the knowledge to protect children if she had concerns. However, parents are not given a written child protection policy.

Parents' written permission is not sought for relevant aspects of the childminding service, such as photos or outings. Consequently, children are not cared for according to parents' wishes in these respects.

Recent child protection training has been sought, which has equipped the childminder with the knowledge to act in the children's best interests with concerns. However, her child protection policy is quite basic, and does not reflect her good knowledge and training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel confident and relaxed with the childminder, enjoying making choices of activities, and chatting happily. They confidently and happily approach the childminder for stories, cuddles, and are secure in her care. Children are settled and confident, choosing and asking for activities, playing independently and taking part in adult led activities. Children enjoy a good balance of adult directed and children initiated activities. Children enjoy feeding the rabbit and the horses.

Children are learning all the time, because the childminder takes every opportunity to encourage children to talk and think. Pre school children confidently recognize their names, and practice making the sounds of letters. Books encourage chats about safety, and the world around them.

The childminder quickly responds to children's interests, finding activities and resources requested, such as playing the fire drill game, and reading Cinderella. Children's enjoyment of the toys is enhanced, as they often take selected items home to share with their parents.

The childminder listens to children's contributions, and appreciates their comments, which helps them to feel good about themselves and raises their self esteem.

The childminder has started to make use of the Birth to three matters framework in the provision and planning of activities for small children, helping to ensure that young children's needs are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They have formed positive relationships with the childminder. All children are treated with affection, showing them that they are all valuable. The childminder appreciates children's contributions, listening attentively, and celebrating achievements.

The childminder helps children to understand about diversity in society by talking to children honestly about differences between people, and encouraging respect by her example.

Children's individual or special needs are cared for sensitively, as the childminder works with parents, and ensures she is well informed about their care. She helps all children to be included, for example, by the use of some basic sign language.

Relationships with parents are friendly, supportive and informal, and parents' thank-you cards indicate that they are very pleased with her care of their children, and the support they received as parents. These positive relationships help children feel secure. Parents receive some information about the childminder's policies and procedures, but are not fully informed about issues such as child protection.

Children behave well, as a result of plenty of praise and encouragement, building their feelings of self worth, and confidence. They respond well to being happily occupied, and having consistent boundaries.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children feel at home and at ease in the well-organised environment. This means they are confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. Organization of space is good. Children can move around freely in the sitting room, and sleep in an adjacent room, so they can be checked on regularly.

The childminder organizes her time so that she can dedicate her time to the care of the children. She provides a secure routine, which is flexible according to the children's needs and preferences. The daily routine is organized to include meal times, active times, quiet times, and outings. Consequently, children are content and secure.

All of the required documentation is kept efficiently. An accurate record of attendance in a diary shows the childminder is complying with her conditions of registration. A record of complaints has been prepared, a poster informing parents about Ofsted is displayed and the certificate of registration is displayed, all in line with recent guidance. However, she does not have parents' written permission for some aspects of children's care, such as photographs and outings.

The childminder has attended a business workshop in order to help her provide more efficient service for children and parents. She has prepared well presented information to inform parents of some aspects of her childminding service, with photographs of examples of activities. However, some aspects of care, such as her responsibilities towards child protection, are not covered.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

Good progress has been made with the actions and recommendations from the last inspection.

The childminder agreed to extend her knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues. She understands the importance of inclusion, actively encourages children to respect others, and welcomes children with special needs.

She also agreed to extend her knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. She has a leaflet for reference, and displays a good knowledge and understanding of procedures, so now has the correct information to keep children safe if she has concerns.

She agreed to promote children's good health by improving her medication records. Records are now accurate.

Lastly, she agreed to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. They are now well-informed because there is an accurate procedure, and also Ofsted's poster is prominently displayed.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints 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):

- develop the use of the Birth to three matters framework in the provision and planning of activities for young children
- develop written information provided for parents
- obtain parents' written permission for relevant aspects of children's care.

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