



Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 126471  
**Inspection date** 28 February 2006  
**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](http://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 before 1989. The childminder lives with her husband and adult daughter. They live in a house on the outskirts of Maidstone. The whole of the downstairs is used for childminding and one bedroom can be used as a sleeping area. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for up to 6 children under 8 at any one time and is currently minding 5 children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder does not offer overnight care.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The home is very clean and the childminder follows good hygiene practices. She explains routines so children learn the importance of personal hygiene. For example, they learn to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet and why they need to wash their hands. They have access to individual towels and use tissues whenever they are needed.

The childminder helps children develop healthy eating habits. She prepares and provides fresh foods for children's snacks which are healthy, such as fruits, toast and ryvita. The childminder has a good understanding of healthy eating for young children and encourages them to access their drinks whenever they need one. She ensures children drink plenty by topping up their beakers, especially in warm weather to prevent dehydration.

The childminder ensures children have regular physical exercise, using large play equipment in the garden, such as bikes. They also go to the local parks, for walks to the local shops, library and play areas. Children learn about 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 enjoy their play in a safe, secure environment as the home is very clean and tidy. A thorough risk assessment of the house and garden has been carried out and children benefit from the precautions taken to prevent accidents.

The children have access to sufficient space which is appropriately organised to offer them a choice of areas and safe, suitable toys, resources and equipment. Children have easy and safe access to a varied supply of suitable toys and resources appropriate for their age, such as construction sets, books and dolls. Toys and resources are carefully selected to ensure they are suitable and these are checked regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child.

Children benefit from a clear awareness of health and safety, for example, sockets are covered, there are smoke detectors, safety gates are in place, a fire blanket is available and emergency evacuation procedures are planned. The garden is checked for safety and well maintained.

Children are always closely supervised at all times when playing in the garden. It is fully enclosed and children cannot leave unaccompanied. The area is checked before children play and the large play equipment is clean and safe.

The childminder has clear procedures for outings. She ensures children do not run into the road through the use of discussion and instruction. Children learn about

personal safety and discuss road safety, such as 'stop, look, listen' at the kerb, so they understand why they need to stay close and hold hands.

The childminder has an understanding of the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the childminder's understanding of her role in the protection of children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children successfully develop their confidence and independence through asking questions, chatting and playing with childminder. Children are happy and relaxed because the childminder is warm and affectionate towards them. They happily approach the childminder, indicating good relationships are built and they receive good support making them feel comfortable and valued.

Children show independence and make choices about the activities they become involved in. The childminder helps them become involved in play by asking good questions when she notices a child looking at the toy house for 'Winnie the Pooh'. Children make good progress, learning to name colours, identify shapes and cook cakes.

They talk about their toys and the childminder reads to children and asks questions encouraging them to learn new skills, such as recognising letters and sounds and naming the items they represent, like 'M' for the child's name. Children enjoy their play and learning owing to the good support and positive encouragement of the childminder.

Children enjoy playing with the resources and toys and benefit using the outside environment on a regular basis. They develop their physical skills by walking to the local shops, playing in local parks and play areas. Children extend their social skills by visiting local play areas and the library where they play with other children.

Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities, such as art and craft, painting, modelling salt dough, and dressing up, and their understanding is supported through the good explanations and comments made by the childminder. The childminder has not fully developed her use of the Birth to three matters framework for use with young children.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs and backgrounds are positively valued and respected by the childminder who uses her knowledge of individual backgrounds to guide her care. Children are encouraged to understand and respect differences through the use of discussion and resources that reflect positive images so that they develop a balanced view of society.

Children with special needs are assessed, adaptations made to the environment, and practice if necessary. The childminder has some experience of children's special needs and is aware that regular liaison with parents helps to ensure they are valued and given the right care to meet their needs.

Children receive plenty of praise and encouragement to develop good manners. Clear strategies are in place for children to learn about right and wrong in a way that is sensitive and promotes their welfare. Children's self-esteem is effectively built through recognition of their achievements and encouragement of positive behaviour.

The childminder provides parents with verbal information about the children's experiences and routines during the day. She ensures children feel well settled by arranging several visits before she begins to mind them. Parents have copies of documents, such as contracts, and can see the certificate of registration, although there is no written statement to identify any policies and procedures for childcare practice. Parents exchange information with the childminder to ensure continuity of care is offered between home and the setting.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the appropriate organisation of the childminding service. Children have free access to well organised play areas, as well as safe, checked and clean resources. They enjoy their play and receive good support and encouragement whenever they need it. The environment is carefully managed to ensure the safety and effective supervision of the children, although there is no fire blanket in place.

The childminder is aware of her responsibility to ensure the documentation is up-to-date and she has the required procedures in place. Parents are kept informed of children's development and this is supported by the childminder's good understanding of the children's needs.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the childminder has addressed four recommendations and made improvements. Children are able to access a variety of healthy snacks, light meals and drinks. Children's welfare is safeguarded by the records for emergency use, (including consent to obtain treatment or advice should this be necessary,) and the arrival and departure times. Children are supervised in the garden and the pebbles covering one area have been changed for larger ones, so that they cannot swallow these.

Children's safety is further safeguarded by the childminder's completion of a first aid course in July 2005 and is valid until 2008.

### **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):

- keep a record of visitors to the premises during childminding hours
- continue developing use of the Birth to three matters framework for young children

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)