



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126853
Inspection date	16 June 2006
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori
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 1992. She lives with her husband and two adult sons in Hawkhurst near Cranbrook, Kent. Childminding generally takes place on the ground floor and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder takes children to a number of local indoor play facilities as well as visiting local parks.

The Childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding three children, two of whom attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is able to take children both to the school and the pre-school in Hawkhurst and has the use of a car if necessary. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and has a pet cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and are very well supported to understand the importance of personal hygiene. They are learning that they must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They are also learning how to blow their noses. They are effectively protected by the well thought out arrangements the childminder has in place regarding the care of sick children and administration of medicines. Nappy changing practices are appropriate and children who are toilet training are well supported by the childminder.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to take part in physical activities. They use the childminder's garden, which is equipped with a range of toys, and also enjoy regular outings to local parks and play facilities.

The childminder has a strong commitment to ensuring that children eat healthily. Whilst parents and carers provide packed lunches for their children, the childminder supplements these with a range of nutritious snacks and drinks. On occasion, children take part in cooking activities and these are planned to take account of their likes and dislikes as well as their individual dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, safe environment. They play with toys and equipment that are in good condition and appropriate for their age and stage of development. They are able to easily and safely access the toys themselves.

Children are protected by a number of safety precautions including socket covers and the use of a stair gate. The childminder is also very vigilant in her supervision which allows children to develop a good level of independence.

The childminder has clearly identified the escape routes from the house in case of a fire or emergency and has smoke alarms which are tested regularly. There is also a fire blanket in the kitchen, however this is not wall mounted and is positioned directly beside the cooker making it impractical to use in a real emergency.

The childminder is able to deal appropriately with accidents, having completed a paediatric first aid course. She maintains written records which she shares with parents who then sign to confirm that they have been informed.

The childminder is confident in her ability to notice the potential signs and symptoms of child abuse. Her understanding of the responsibility she has to report any concerns ensures that children are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children form very warm relationships with the childminder and enjoy her friendly, calm manner. They approach her readily for attention and enjoy the praise and encouragement they receive.

Children are comfortable in her home and confidently select toys for themselves and choose the activities they wish to take part in. They make particularly good use of the role play equipment and engage in very animated and imaginative games. Activities which are also popular include cooking, construction, puzzles, stories and a wide range of arts and crafts opportunities. In addition, children are also taken on a range of outings to parks and local places of interest.

The childminder has a very good understanding of the individual needs of each child and skilfully provides them with activities which provide a good level of challenge. Younger children are very well supported to develop their language and physical skills. Similarly, in addition to playing freely with toys, older pre-school children are beginning to practise writing and basic maths. All children benefit greatly from the one to one attention they receive at different times through the day.

The childminder is skilful in settling tired children and competently plans each day to provide children with a good balance of restful as well as more stimulating activities. As a result, children's all round well-being is promoted.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is entirely appropriate for their ages and stages of development. The childminder promotes positive behaviour by praising children and ensuring they are engaged and occupied.

Children play with a range of toys that provide positive images of people throughout the local community and wider world. They are developing good self-esteem as a result of the childminder's commitment to respecting them as individuals.

Effective procedures are in place to support children with special needs; the childminder has a very positive attitude towards ensuring the needs of all children are met.

Children benefit from the positive relationships between the childminder and their parents and carers. The childminder provides a very good range of written information and makes time available each day to share information.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder maintains all required records and has a range of clear written policies and procedures in place. All documentation is well ordered and easily accessible.

Space within the home is very well used, encouraging children to move around independently and allowing a number of different activities to take place at the same time.

By skilfully managing her time, the childminder effectively ensures that each individual child receives the care and attention they need. As a result of this children are happy, settled and confident.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following her last inspection the childminder received a recommendation to consider the hygiene needs of children who are with her for a full day. This referred specifically to encouraging children to brush their teeth after eating their lunch. The childminder has discussed this issue with the children's parents and now has tooth brushes available for all children.

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):

- consider re-positioning the fire blanket to ensure that it can be easily and safely accessed in an emergency

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk