



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	104760
Inspection date	17 May 2006
Inspector	Valerie Button

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 1993. He works alongside his wife, who is also a registered child minder. They work together in their detached house on the edge of Westward Hoe where they live with their adult son and daughter. The childminder works in support of his wife for a considerable amount of time, although he is also engaged in other work outside the home. The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years old. At present a total of four children are cared for in the home.

A conservatory at the back of the house is given over to childminding. This is the main play area and it opens out into the secure garden. Sleeping facilities for young children are available in the adjacent lounge. There are no family pets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's care needs are well met. A good, flexible, daily routine is established, with opportunities to rest and relax as well as be active. Children sleep in the adjoining lounge so that they can be carefully monitored. Children benefit from fresh air and exercise. There is easy access to outside play from the indoor playroom. Children are able to move freely between the two areas, whilst still under careful supervision. Children are protected from infection as good attention is given to hand-washing before and after meal times. Information about children's food preferences and any allergies is carefully recorded. Children enjoy suitable meal times and food brought from home is safely stored. Children's well-being is maintained as written consent is obtained for the seeking of emergency advice or treatment. The childminder has renewed his first aid qualifications. The procedure for administering any medication is generally well completed, with an updated system recently adopted. Good information, sometimes in written form, is given to parents about their child's care and nourishment during the time spent at the childminder's home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well organised, safe environment, both indoors and out. They enjoy using suitable toys that are clean and well-maintained. Children are kept safe as the home is secure and the garden is enclosed. The free access between the playroom and the garden supports the meticulous supervision of the children, which is often on a one-to-one basis. Sleeping children are in a room adjoining the playroom so that they are easily heard and monitored. The childminder is involved with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents safety organisation, for example, providing some council courses on road safety issues, such as speeding. His work, as a driving instructor, also results in particularly careful attention being given to car safety features, such as the children's car seats. Generally good attention is given to fire safety issues, for example, emergency evacuation of the premises is regularly practised with the children. However, though there are smoke alarms on the first floor and in the loft, there are none on the ground floor. Children are well protected. The childminder knows the children and their families very well. He has the relevant guidance on file, has attended a short training course and is very well aware of his responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are sensitively cared for and are happy and cheerful. They show warm relationships with the childminder who demonstrates his great care for them, for example, when reporting on the measures he took to ensure that one child settled happily at playgroup, and again when searching and finding a doll's tiny shoe. Interactions with children are often on a one-to-one basis. Children enjoy a range of suitable activities indoors and out. They also go on trips out of the home. The childminder is skilled at including children in tasks, such as car washing, when

there is much fun and enjoyment. The childminder particularly enjoys active, outdoor play with the children, such as building camps or making courses for bike riding. However, he also contributes to the care needs of children, for example, sitting with children whilst they eat their snacks or meaningfully joining in their play and extending their learning. Young children's care routines, such as their times to sleep or to go to playgroup, are skilfully woven into the daily routine so that their individual needs are respected. The fact that there are often two childminders present means, for example, that sleeping babies do not have to be disturbed to collect older children from school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed. Their company is much enjoyed and they respond well to consistent behaviour management and plenty of praise and encouragement. The two childminders, working together, present very good, caring role models to the children. Children respond well and behaviour management is good. The childminder ensures that children's individual needs are well met and has a good understanding of equal opportunities issues.

Children benefit from the strong partnership between the childminder and their parents. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents wishes. The regular exchange of information between childminder and parents, either verbally or through written daily 'diaries', keeps both parties well informed and ensures that there is a consistent approach to promoting the children's care and welfare. The childminder is able to show written comments from parents which state their huge satisfaction with the good levels of care their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom he provides. Children clearly feel at home in the well organised environment. They have good spaces for play, both indoors and out. Children receive very good levels of attention, with the childminder and his wife working together for much of the time. This also means that children can be taken to nearby schools and playgroups by one of the childminders whilst others remain in the home. Policies, procedures and the care of the children are all carefully discussed between the two childminders, who work very well together, as a team, to organise and provide good quality care for children. Contracts with parents have been established with the childminder's wife; none exist between the childminder and parents, though written permission slips, such as those for car transport or to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, are in both childminders' names. The register of attendance is not always sufficiently accurate in recording the children's attendance, for example, when children are at playgroup the register does not record their absence. Thus, the means of checking who is on the premises is not always secure. Neither is it sufficiently clear which of the childminders has overall responsibility for the children at any given time, for example, there is no system to record when one of the childminders is not at home. These uncertainties compromise the care of the children. Good attention has been given to ensuring that all adults living in the home have been suitably vetted. The childminder has attended

regular training to update his skills, for example, child protection training and a course on the new inspection regime.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection children have benefited from the purchase of some new toys and equipment. Play items are set out to welcome children when they first arrive, but storage systems have been improved to allow children to select play resources for themselves. New items purchased include dressing up clothes, books and puzzles to reflect positive images of race, culture and disability. Toys are regularly cleaned. Children are encouraged to help with this. There is an efficient system for checking that all toys and equipment are in a good state of repair and safe for children's use. The childminder uses the local toy library so that play equipment available to the children is varied.

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):

- establish written contracts with parents to set out the expectations of both parties as to the care of the child
- ensure that the register of attendance is accurate in showing when children are on the premises and showing which of the childminders is responsible for the children
- ensure that there is a working smoke alarm downstairs.

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