



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	126233
Inspection date	06 September 2006
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
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 1997. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and nine in Herne Bay, Kent. Specific areas of the ground floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and the bedrooms upstairs for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding seven children all on a part time basis.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler groups.

The family has a cat and a rabbit.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well maintained home where toys and equipment are clean. The childminder uses effective hygiene and personal care to reduce the risk of cross infection. However, children are not learning about appropriate hand washing during the daily routine; for example, their hands are sometimes wiped before they eat and on the day of inspection hand washing was forgotten prior to lunch. A sick child policy, first aid training 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. Parents give their written permission to administer medication and generally sign to acknowledge the dose. However, a few entries in the medication log were not signed by parents to show that they were aware that the medication had been given.

The parents provide a packed lunch that is stored appropriately. The childminder provides the snacks. Children enjoy healthy snacks such as dried fruit. The childminder has a healthy eating policy. She requests that parents supply healthy options for their children so they remain well nourished. Children are provided with plenty of drinks throughout the day to keep them hydrated. Children's individual schedules are respected by the childminder which means that children are able to sleep when they wish. Children enjoy garden play and are able to free flow from inside to outside as there is a safe area in which to play. Children clearly enjoy being outdoors; for example, they expressed their excitement as they put on their shoes, talking about the sand, cars and slide outside. Older children have equipment such as a swing ball and a badminton set to play with to meet their physical needs. In addition, children enjoy many outings such as toddler groups, parks, beach and local places of interest. These activities contribute to the children's physical well being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The childminder has undertaken informal risk assessments in her home and outdoors to ensure the children are safe and secure at all times. Toys are safe, clean and well maintained as the childminder cleans them regularly, checks them for safety and disposes of them if needed. As a result, children are able to play safely. Children learn about keeping themselves safe; for example, they were guided as they came down the slide on their tummies. In addition, they are taught about safety on outings through discussion and positive reinforcement. The childminder safeguards and promotes the children's welfare. There are effective procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children; for example, only people known to the childminder may pick the children up. In an emergency passwords are used along with the date of birth of the child. The childminder knows the recommendations for sleeping babies so they are put down to sleep appropriately.

Children are protected as the childminder has a good knowledge of child protection and knows what to do should she suspect abuse. She has on file the publication, 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused,' has attended recent training and keeps a record of existing

injuries to show any patterns which may lead to concerns. There is an evacuation plan, smoke alarms and a fire blanket to contribute to the children's safety in a fire. The childminder shares the plan with the parents; however has not yet practised it with the children. She has written parents' permissions for transporting children in a vehicle or for going on outings. In addition, all children's contact numbers are taken on outings so that parents can be quickly reached should there be an emergency. Children are protected from the sun with hats and sunscreen. The childminder has sought parents permission to administer sunscreen either verbally or via the contact book. She has not retained the written permission on file.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy with the childminder. There is a variety of toys and equipment for them to play with. Children interact well together and are becoming social; for example, one child said 'I will move this out of the way for her', as a younger child walked by with a pull-along toy. The childminder thanked her for being kind promoting both her self esteem and encouraging appropriate behaviour. Children learn about mathematical concepts as the childminder talks to them about shapes, colour, size and capacity as they play; for example, when they put on their shoes to go outside they talked about big and little, the size of the shoes and their feet. The childminder talks to the children constantly about what they are doing, modelling good language. She listens to what they say as their language skills develop, sometimes giving them words to help them express themselves. Children enjoy singing; for example, they all sang 'Seesaw Marjorie Daw', when they played on the seesaw. The childminder often joins in helping to further promote their language skills.

Children are supported by the childminder as they play; for example, they played in the sand together and learnt about simple turn taking as they pushed cars to each other. In addition, all three children cuddled up with the childminder for stories. They clearly enjoy books which promotes a love of reading. The childminder asks lots of open-ended questions to make them think. Children use their imagination as they are able to dress up and pretend. They thoroughly enjoy playing on large equipment such as wheeled toys and the slide enabling them to use their large muscles as they practise their skills. Children are able to be creative and photographic evidence showed them sticking, painting, printing, playing with play dough and playing with macaroni in the sand table. They also enjoy being creative as they make music with a range of instruments.

The childminder understands the differences in the ages and stages of development. She has reviewed the Birth to three matters framework and watched the video. She said it is good practice and what comes naturally when caring for the younger children. However, she would like to attend a course to learn how she could use it further to promote positive outcomes for the children under three. She explained that the school aged children like to use their imagination as they play with the large dolls house, practise their physical skills as they play outside or sometimes sit quietly to relax after a busy day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are content in the childminder's care. They enjoy her company and readily approach her to play. There is a settling in procedure that includes short visits. In addition, if children have been absent for a period of time; for example, the summer holidays, they are offered a visit prior to their return to full days. Consequently, they settle very well. The childminder has set boundaries that the children understand. Positive behaviour is promoted through praise and encouragement which promotes the children's self esteem. If children exhibit inappropriate behaviour the childminder talks to them or redirects them, depending on their age. She gives the children words to express their feelings and give them power; for example, she says, 'tell him/her no thank you,' when a child tries to take something away from another. As a result, the children are learning about appropriate behaviour and are very well behaved. Children learn to take turns, play co-operatively and share; for example, when they played with the pushchairs together, and took turns coming down the slide and on the see saw.

The children's record forms detail religion and any special requirements to enable the childminder to cater for their individual needs. Children learn about the local community when they go on visits to the local beach and parks, to post letters at the post office and to local places of interest such as Wingham Wildlife Park. There are a few resources that reflect positive images of different cultures to help children develop knowledge and understanding of the world; for example, dolls and instruments. The childminder also acknowledges holidays celebrated by other cultures as well as the children's own culture. Children are taught to have positive images as the childminder has a positive attitude and talks to the children about differences.

The childminder finds out about children's routines by working closely with the parents. Information is shared with parents daily through discussion and with the use of a detailed contact book. This keeps them informed and provides continuity of care. The childminder keeps a comprehensive book of observations and photographs for each child. She regularly discusses these with the parents and they are given the book when their children leave her care. The childminder informs parents when her inspection is due. As a result, a parent provided a reference. This expressed immense satisfaction with the care the childminder provides and the progress their child is making as a result of being in the childminder's care. There are a range of policies that inform parents of the childminder's service. Parents receive copies to refer to at any time. Written permission has been sought for outings, transporting children in a vehicle and to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Contracts are in place outlining business details to ensure that the childminder is providing the care parents wish. There is a complaints policy and the childminder is able to describe how she would share complaints with the parents. She is aware she must keep a log of any complaints but has not developed one as of yet.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She uses the space well so that children can move freely and safely. Children are confident to play and are at home in the childminder's care. The daily routine is organised to include a variety of activities; for example, the children are being taken to the beach to collect shells this week. All of the

required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children is maintained and stored securely. All of the policies are shared with the parents. The certificate of registration is generally displayed so that parents are aware of the childminder's conditions of registration. However, due to home redecoration while the children were on holiday it has not yet been placed back on the wall. The attendance register shows that the childminder complies with her conditions of registration. All adults living in the premises have had appropriate checks to ensure they are suitable to be around children. The childminder keeps her last Ofsted report on file for the parents review along with her certificates to show the training she has attended. She is committed to improvement and keeps her knowledge up to date by attending courses as they become available.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and to develop the planning of activities.

The childminder has requested parents' permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; as a result, they are able to make a choice for their children. The childminder does informal planning for the week which is flexible and based on themes. Children are offered a variety of activities both inside and out; for example, the theme 'beaches' is being supported with a visit to the local beach to collect shells. Therefore, children are learning through real experiences that are meaningful to them. In addition, she keeps observations on each of the children she cares for. These are used to assess if the activities provided are developmentally appropriate and meet the children needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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:

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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):

- ensure children learn about good hygiene practice in regard to hand washing
- ensure parents always sign to acknowledge the administration of medication.

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