



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	156699
Inspection date	19 June 2006
Inspector	Jenny Kane
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 2001. She lives in Shadoxhurst, near Ashford, with her three children. The ground floor of the premises is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time, and is currently minding eight children aged from three to 10 years.

Schools, pre-schools, toddler groups, shops and parks are a short drive away. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, comfortable and welcoming premises. The childminder maintains accident and medication records, has first aid resources ready to hand and holds a current first aid certificate. She promotes the health of the children by maintaining good standards of hygiene and cleanliness. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating, and this helps to prevent the spread of germs. She pays good attention to her own personal hygiene, for example, by using disposable gloves when cleaning up spills, cleaning surfaces and toys with anti-bacterial spray and washing her hands before preparing food.

Children receive a good range of nutritious and healthy meals and snacks, which include fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder has a very good understanding of meeting individual dietary needs. She consults with parents about menus, taking into account their wishes and requirements. Older children help to prepare meals and snacks and this helps them to understand about healthy eating. Drinks are freely available and children have their own individual drinking bottle, which means they can help themselves to a drink whenever they require.

Children engage in regular daily outdoor activities, which help to keep them healthy. Outings to toddler groups and play centres, where they use the large play equipment, give children the opportunity to develop their physical skills. There is a good amount of space indoors for active physical play. Children rest and sleep when they need to and the childminder discusses sleeping arrangements with the parent. Older children relax and sit quietly on the sofas in the living room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a spacious, well-maintained and secure environment. The childminder takes positive steps to ensure children's safety at all times and to minimise risks. She carries out a visual risk assessment of all areas used daily, which means that children can move about freely and safely. Children have access to a secure part of the large garden, which they use in most weather conditions. A good range of play equipment is available, which helps to create a stimulating environment. It is of good condition and cleaned regularly.

Good procedures are in place, to ensure children's safety on outings. The childminder carries with her a mobile phone, small first aid kit and relevant documents, regarding the children in her care. She shares vehicle information with parents and they give written permission to travel in her vehicle.

A very good range of toys and equipment is available for children's play, which is suitable for their age and stage of development. Children enjoy having a designated playroom, which is well organised and child-friendly. Children make choices for themselves and freely select what they play with from the toys that are stored in tubs, boxes, cupboards and shelves around the play area.

The childminder has a good awareness and understanding of child protection issues. This ensures all children in her care are safe from harm. She has basic written procedures in place, which she shares with the parents. She intends to attend training in the subject to increase her knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident and make themselves at home in their surroundings. They enjoy a very good range of interesting and stimulating activities, which are fun and age-appropriate. The daily routine is flexible and well-organised, and planned according to the children's capabilities. Children are interested and take part readily, for example, they use the puppets and theatre to put on a show. The older child helps the younger child to manipulate the puppets and, with the childminder's help, they work together to re-enact 'little red riding hood'.

Children show enthusiasm, use their imaginations during play, and are eager to suggest ideas and ask questions. They ask if they can play outside and the childminder responds in a positive way, providing play in the garden. Children's work and photographs displayed around the playroom gives them a sense of achievement. They are encouraged to take things they have made home with them, to share with their parents.

The childminder builds strong and positive relationships with the children, which ensures they feel secure in her care. She has a very good rapport and children respond well to her friendly approach. Children relate well to each other and are clear communicators. They play well together, sharing and taking turns with the resources. Children benefit from socialising and mixing with other children of similar age, during visits to toddler group and outings in the community. Older children are involved in the planning of activities and the childminder encourages them to take part in activities and clubs out of school.

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child development. She has recently attended training in the Birth to three matters framework and hopes to introduce this into the planning of daily activities and recording of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled and have a good attachment to the childminder. They fit in well with her family and are able to express personal preferences. The childminder treats children with respect and as individuals, with their own particular needs. This helps children to feel secure and have good self-esteem. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure she meets any specific needs or requirements. Children benefit from routines, which are consistent with their experiences at home.

The childminder does not currently care for children with a special need or disability. She has a good awareness and is confident, in her ability to provide care for children with a range of abilities. The premises are reasonably user-friendly with good access and parking. Children have

access to a good range of play materials, which reflect diversity and positive images. They gain an understanding of the wider world through discussion and various activities. Children make choices about what they play with and have access to all the toys.

Behaviour management strategies, according to the age and stage of development, work well in practice and are effective. The childminder deals with incidents consistently, in a caring way and with a calm approach. Older children benefit from clear boundaries and ground rules. Children are involved in the planning of activities and this helps to promote positive behaviour. Consequently, their behaviour is good. Parents discuss methods to manage children's unwanted behaviour with the childminder and they deal with any problems as they arise, which ensures consistent care.

Partnership with parents is good. The childminder has established friendly working relationships with the parents. She shares information about children's care, progress and development, both verbally and in writing. Written policies and procedures are in place, but some need updating and expanding. The use of contact books helps to monitor children's development and ensures parents have a permanent written record of their children's progress and achievements.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a well-organised and child-friendly home environment. The childminder organises her time well. She cares for a mix of ages but manages the routine effectively, so that children receive plenty of attention while they are in her care. Her flexible approach allows older children to organise and pursue their own activities and games. The day is well-planned, allowing children time for quiet and active play. A good mix of activities indoors, in the garden and regular outings helps the childminder meet the developing needs of all the children.

The childminder has established a good network of support and cover for emergencies and holidays with other childminders. This ensures that she provides professional and reliable care for parents. She has a good commitment to her own development and training, and attends the local childminding group, where discussing issues and sharing ideas helps to improve her childcare practice.

Children's records are secure, shared with parents and are readily available. However, there are no records to show when visitors are present and some of the paperwork needs reorganising and updating. The childminder has a friendly yet professional approach, which provides children with continuity and stability. She takes into account parents' opinions and looks after children according to their wishes. 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 updated the written permissions needed from parents, regarding medication and emergency treatment. She has extended her knowledge of child protection procedures and has made plans to attend training.

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):

- continue to develop the use of the birth to three matters framework and use it in the planning and recording of activities and development
- update and amend written policies, in particular complaints, and share with parents
- ensure a record of visitors is maintained

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