



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY224982
Inspection date	05 May 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 satisfactory. 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 June 2003. She lives with her husband and two young children in South Ashford. All areas of the premises are used for childminding except for the main bedroom. There is a small enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 3 children at any one time and is currently minding 3 children aged from 1 to 7 years on a full and part-time basis.

School, pre-schools, toddler groups, shops and parks are within walking distance. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder holds an NVQ level 2 qualification in childcare and 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 warm and comfortable premises. The childminder maintains accident and medication records, has a first aid box available and holds a current first aid certificate. Children are reasonably independent when using the bathroom, but they do not have individual towels, and this increases the risk of cross infection.

Children bring their own food and packed lunches. The childminder removes any perishables and stores them in the fridge. Drinks are available during the morning and children use individual cups with lids. The older child sits at a low table to eat her snack of juice and banana, but she does not use a plate. The baby sits on the floor to eat his snack of raisins, but several drop on the floor. The school age child brings his food with him. However, this remains with him during the long school day and this is not a healthy option.

Younger children sleep when they need to using a travel cot in the living room. The childminder discusses arrangements with the parents and records sleep patterns, food intake and nappy changes in the contact book, which helps to keep them informed and ensures continuity of care.

Children engage in regular activities, which help to keep them healthy. Outings to the local park, indoor play centres and toddler groups, where they use the large play equipment, gives children the opportunity to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment. They benefit from the use of the conservatory, which is the main playroom. A good range of toys and equipment is available, which is suitable for their age and stage of development. Children make choices for themselves and select what they play with from the boxes and cupboards around the play areas

The childminder takes positive steps to ensure children's safety and to minimise risks. She carries out a visual risk assessment of all areas used by the children, which means they can move about freely and safely. However, there are no written procedures covering safety arrangements.

Children have access to the garden, but it was not in use during the inspection. The childminder does not generally use the garden because the family's pet Dalmatian uses it. She therefore takes children for walks and outings. She uses pushchairs, reins and buggy board, carries a mobile phone, small first aid kit, drinks and spare clothes. On longer, all day trips, she takes documents regarding the children in her care. The childminder intends to carry these as a matter of course and plans to provide parents with written information in case of an emergency.

The childminder has a reasonably good awareness and understanding of child protection issues. She intends to update her procedure and share it with parents, to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and relaxed. They enjoy a good mix of activities, which support their developing needs. The daily routine is flexible and planned around the ages of the children attending, the weather and if children are attending afternoon nursery. Children benefit from meeting and mixing with other children of similar age during visits to toddler group, the childminder drop-in and outings in the community

The childminder builds warm and positive relationships with the children, which ensures they are secure and settled in her care. She has a friendly rapport with the children, gives help and reassurance when needed. The younger child is beginning to explore the environment, moving about the furniture and accessing suitable toys. The older child chooses from the toys and asks to play with the dough. She is happy to make her own play but is more stimulated when the childminder joins in with the play. Children's work displayed on the walls gives them a sense of achievement. They are encouraged to take things they have made home with them in their folder.

The childminder has a reasonably good understanding of child development. She would like to increase her knowledge and intends to access training in the Birth to three matters framework. This will be beneficial in providing a wider range of experiences to meet the needs of younger children and the childminder feels this will improve her practice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder treats children with respect and as individuals with their own particular needs. Children fit in well with the childminder's family and this helps them to feel settled and secure. She works with parents to ensure routines are consistent with experiences at home. For example, the parent of the baby writes a sample routine in contact book and makes her own comments.

Children make choices about what they play with and have access to all the toys. However, the range of toys, which reflect diversity and positive images are limited. The childminder intends to make use of the toy library to borrow multicultural resources, which will help children in her care to increase their knowledge of the wider world.

The childminder does not currently care for children with a special need or disability. She has some previous experience and is confident, in her ability to provide care for children with a range of abilities. The premises are reasonably user-friendly with downstairs toilet facilities and nearby parking.

Behaviour management strategies according to the age and stage of development work well in practice. The childminder uses positive language and is consistent. Parents discuss any

problems as they arise and work together with the childminder. Children benefit from clear boundaries and ground rules. Consequently, their behaviour is good.

The childminder has positive and friendly relationships with the parents. She shares information about children's care and progress both verbally, and in writing. However, written information is limited. For example, parents do not have information regarding complaints and other procedures. The childminder intends to develop this area.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The childminder organises her time effectively ensuring children receive appropriate care and attention. A balance of activities, indoors and regular outings helps the childminder meet the developing needs of all the children.

All mandatory records and documents are in place, kept confidentially and are readily available to parents. However, she needs to improve the registration system, to show when visitors are present. She is friendly and approachable and offers flexible care where possible. She listens to parent's views and looks after children according to their wishes.

The childminder attends the local childminding group where talking to others, discussing new ideas and issues improves her practice. She has established a good network of support and cover for emergencies and holidays with other childminders. This ensures that she provides a reliable and professional service for parents. 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 extended her knowledge of child protection, fitted a smoke alarm to the first floor and has in place written consents for medical treatment.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve the hand washing facilities to prevent cross infection
- improve the arrangements for meals and snacks
- develop the range of experiences and activities for younger children, for example by using the Birth to three matters framework
- increase resources which reflect diversity and positive images
- update written policies and procedures and share them with parents
- ensure the 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