



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY313238
Inspection date 06 March 2006
Inspector Susan Jennifer Scott

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 2005. She lives with her 2 children in a flat on the outskirts of Maidstone, in Kent. The whole of the flat is used for childminding and there is an enclosed outdoor area which can be used for supervised outside play. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children.

The childminder is registered to care for 3 children under 8, and 2 of these may be under 5 years at any one time; she may also offer overnight care for a child under 8 years. The childminder currently minds 2 children who attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder has a tortoise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder follows good hygiene practices and explains these, so that children know why they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet, before eating food and after playing. The children's health is safeguarded through the use of individual towels and cups, avoiding the risks of cross infection. The childminder has made good provision for a sick or injured child. This prevents the spread of contagious ailments and protects all children.

The childminder helps children develop healthy eating habits by preparing and cooking nutritious, fresh food for children's meals, such as pasta, vegetables, fruit and milk puddings. Children sit at the table to eat which encourages good habits and sociable conversations. They can freely access their drinks whenever they need one. Food is carefully prepared and complies with dietary needs and children's preferences so that parents' wishes are adhered to.

The childminder ensures children experience a balance between quiet activities and physical exercise. Children use the large play equipment in the local park and have regular walks. This helps them understand the need for regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a secure and well organised environment. They have a opportunities to access a variety of safe and suitable toys, resources and equipment. The childminder uses a risk assessment to minimise risks and identify and remedy possible hazards. This allows children to move around safely and enjoy their play in a secure environment. For example, gates are used to prevent access to some areas.

Toys and resources are carefully selected and checked regularly to ensure they are suitable for children and babies to use. They are regularly rotated so that children are provided with a good variety that stimulates them. The childminder is vigilant and ensures that children are happily occupied and safely supervised, both in the home and while playing outside.

The children are kept safe when on outings. The childminder ensures she has consent to transport children in a car, as well as ensuring that she can contact parents should the need arise to do so. The childminder encourages children to develop their sense of safety through discussions about the road and the issues around safety.

The childminder understands how to protect children and ensures children's welfare is safeguarded through appropriate procedures and documentation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, relaxed and confident. They approach the childminder for support, for instance, when they want a particular activity or game out. This indicates good relationships are built. Children are encouraged to feel valued because their ideas are acknowledged. For instance, children can play with their favourite toys. They show independence and make choices about the activities they become involved in, selecting and discussing choices with the childminder who encourages appropriate choices.

Children feel comfortable and valued because the childminder is warm and affectionate towards them, giving encouragement when appropriate. The children are encouraged to become independent as the childminder provides good support and appropriate explanations during their play. For example, children experience a good variety of developmentally appropriate activities.

Children's individual needs are met through the variety of choices offered, for instance, they experience good social opportunities enabling them to attend the local play areas and parks, libraries and toddler clubs, where they can develop their understanding of their community.

Children enjoy and learn from a good range of carefully and imaginatively planned activities. They access a stimulating range of equipment which develops their thinking, such as construction sets and counting. Children develop their language skills through discussions with the childminder who asks questions to challenge their thinking.

Children's creative and imaginative development is effectively developed through role-play, pretence and a range of well planned craft activities, such as making pictures. They experience stimulating opportunities that allow them to explore and investigate when they cook, cracking eggs to make pancakes. They experience a good balance of energetic and quiet activities which promote their physical skills, such as using the varied craft tools, and playing outside.

Children flourish and have good opportunities provided by the childminder that enhance their emotional development; she encourages children to develop their understanding by talking about their experiences and things that interest them, such as their experiences at school, and their achievements during the day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity and has a positive attitude towards diversity. Children are treated with respect and are made to

feel good about themselves, they play with resources that reflect diversity and this helps them develop a balanced view of the world. Children gain confidence by being acknowledged by their carer as important individuals which helps them develop a sense of belonging.

The childminder has experience of working with children with special needs and she ensures that all children's developmental needs are discussed and noted before she begins to care for them. The care they receive helps them develop a positive self image, as routines for sleeping and eating are organised to suit their individual needs.

Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement and their good behaviour is promoted through the use of recognition and reward in the form of stickers. The children behave very well and play together harmoniously due to the good attention and support the childminder gives to them.

Parents are welcomed into the childminder's home and kept fully informed of the childminder's practice through the use of contact books and verbal feedback when they collect children. Parents have good access to a variety of very good information about the childminding service, including clear and informative policy statements and information on how to contact the regulator. This develops parents' confidence in the service and ensures the children's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the good organisation of the childminding service. Children have free access to well organised play areas, which are safe and clean. Children access stimulating resources, as well as interesting activities which are very well planned and supported. The environment is carefully managed to ensure the safety and effective supervision of the children.

The documentation is very well organised, well thought through, secure and used effectively so that parents are kept informed and children are protected. However, there is no record of visitors or complaints record ready for use should this be needed. Children's development is enhanced by the childminder's good understanding of the children's development and her professional approach. She has used questionnaires with children to evaluate her service and see if it can be improved. These reveal that children are very happy in her care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- provide a record ready for use to record any complaints
- maintain a record of visitors to the premises during childminding hours

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk