

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	115858
Inspection date	30 November 2007
Inspector	Sarer Marcia Tarling
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 1987. She lives with her husband and their adult daughter in a three bedroom house in Upper Belvedere, Kent within the London Borough of Bexley.

The home is within walking distance of local schools, shops, parks, bus routes and train stations. Although all areas of the property are suitable to be used for childminding, and the bathroom is situated on the first floor, it is mainly the ground floor that is used for childminding. A fully enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The childminder has a pet dog, a 'Bechion Friese' which is a French poodle.

The childminder may care for up to six children under the age of eight years. She currently has four part-time children under eight years on roll. The childminder also provides care for children over the age of eight years and currently has one part-time child on roll.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's warm and caring approach as she follows clear procedures to ensure each child's health needs are effectively met. Children are assured of appropriate care in the event of an accident or becoming unwell as the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and maintains an appropriately stocked first aid kit. Children are protected from cross-infection as a written policy is shared with parents which asks that they keep their children at home if they are unwell or infectious. Written permission is sought prior to the administration of any medication and the childminder is vigilant as she always checks when the last dose was administered by parents. All accidents, and any medication she is asked to administer, is carefully recorded and parents are kept informed. As a result children's health is protected.

Children are cared for in a very clean and hygienic home. Effective cleaning routines help prevent the spread of infection and positive steps are taken by the childminder to protect children's health. For example, babies can freely explore and crawl on the floor as rugs and furnishings are kept meticulously clean. The childminder routinely checks the safety and cleanliness of all nursery furniture and children are able to play with resources which are clean and in excellent condition. Children are further protected as the childminder ensures the family dog receives routine health care and she maintains a clean garden.

Children are learning how to help keep themselves healthy and are developing an excellent understanding of good personal hygiene from an early age. The childminder chats to the children about washing away germs and the importance of having clean hands before eating and after stroking the dog. Children are encouraged to be independent in their personal care as a step stool ensures they can easily reach the sink and soap after using the toilet. Children are protected from cross-infection as the childminder has embroidered each child's initial onto their own hand towel and she has stringent nappy changing routines in place. For example, she uses disposable changing mats, disposable gloves, ensures children are cleaned thoroughly and soiled nappies disposed of hygienically.

The childminder is aware of each child's individual dietary needs and requirements and any special diets and/or cultural needs are catered for. Children are encouraged to try new foods and learn what foods are good for them as the childminder chats to them about healthy choices. For example, children say that 'crunchy carrots are good for your teeth'. Following consultation with parents the childminder provides children with a healthy breakfast of cereals, toast and fruit. At lunch time parents provide a healthy packed lunch or jars of baby food which the childminder stores and heats up appropriately. After school children enjoy a light tea consisting of a variety of sandwiches, beans-on-toast, raw vegetable batons, fresh fruit and yoghurts. The childminder records and shares with parents what their children have eaten each day. Meals are generally eaten at the table, although children enjoy having a picnic on a rug on the floor. Young children can eat comfortably in a highchair and are able to explore their food and as a consequence learn to feed themselves. Babies are held and cuddled whilst they are bottle fed and as result they feel secure.

Children have access to a range of outdoor activities which contribute to their good health and all-round physical development. For example, children benefit from the fresh air as they walk on the school run and greatly enjoy riding bicycles and exploring on the large equipment at local parks. The childminder has an excellent understanding about the levels of support for

different ages and stages of children, giving them opportunities to play safely. Children like to run through the water at the local splash park and to play ball games together. Indoors children like to dance to music and are skilled at completing difficult puzzles. Children are becoming increasingly aware of the way activity affects their bodies and enjoy a cuddle on the settee, or watch a DVD together when they are tired. As a result children are developing a positive attitude to exercise. Babies are able to rest in comfort, individual sleep patterns are followed and fresh bedding is provided.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder shares a written child protection policy with parents and is in the process of updating this to ensure the wording is consistent with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and/or neglect. She has a sound knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities towards recording and reporting any concerns to the appropriate authorities.

Children benefit from being cared for in a safe, welcoming and well maintained environment. Children settle quickly and are keen to explore and make the most of their time in the childminder's home and garden. The childminder checks her home daily and ensures that any risks are identified and minimised thus allowing children to move around and play safely in the setting. For example, there are no trailing wires, electric sockets are covered, young children cannot injure themselves on the stairs as a safety gate is in position and any potentially harmful chemicals in the kitchen and bathroom have been made inaccessible.

Play resources are kept in boxes on the floor of the living room. This enables even the youngest children to safely and independently select their own toys and activities. All resources are of a good quality and are carefully selected and checked to ensure they are suitable for the children's ages and abilities. For example, small items are kept out of reach from babies and the childminder is vigilant to ensure games with small parts are only set out when young babies are asleep. Highchairs and buggies are all clean and well maintained and the childminder ensures children always wear appropriate restraints. Parents have given written permission for children to go on outings and are asked to provide appropriate car safety seats if the childminder uses her car.

Children are learning the importance of simple rules to help keep them safe when out and about. For example, they always hold onto the buggy, or the childminder's hand, as they practise crossing the road safely. Children are able to explain that it is safest to cross with the 'Lolly Pop Lady'.

Children are developing a good knowledge of how to protect themselves as the childminder regularly discusses, and practises with them, a procedure to follow in the event of a fire or emergency in the home. Children are further protected as the childminder provides a carbon monoxide detector, two smoke detectors and ensures a fire blanket is positioned in the kitchen. The childminder is vigilant as she regularly checks on sleeping children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and relaxed. The highly effective settling in procedure ensures children are happy and familiar with the setting and gives opportunities for the children, their parents and the childminder to get to know each other. As a result the childminder is knowledgeable about all the children she looks after and meets their needs effectively.

There is an excellent balance of organised activities and free play which help children to develop at their own pace. For example, children have opportunities to paint and experiment with leaf, sponge and potato printing, they learn to share and take turns whilst playing board games such as 'Candy Land' and card games such as 'snap'. Children use their imaginations as they play in dressing-up clothes and build tents and dens using sheets over the table and chairs. Children greatly enjoy their time with the childminder as close relationships have been formed and she routinely joins in with their play. The childminder is skilful at turning every day activities into a learning opportunity for children. For example, when they visit the local shops each child has their own basket and is responsible for selecting and paying for some groceries. The children then come home and help the childminder weigh out, mix and bake cakes, bread pudding and they especially enjoy making, and eating, jelly. The childminder helps the children choose appropriate reading books from the school library and spends time looking through them and encouraging their reading skills. Children's confidence and self esteem is developing as they routinely receive praise and encouragement from the childminder as they play.

Younger children benefit from the regular one to one attention the childminder gives them. They enjoy exploring and learning how to use electronic musical and educational activity centres. They like to roll out and play with dough, build with mega blocks and push dolls around in buggies. Children enjoy digging and planting and have watched their flowers grow in pots. Children have lots of opportunities to socialize with their peers at toddler groups and when the childminder meets up with other childminders. Children greatly enjoy visiting Danson park, to run around and collect leaves and take bread to feed the ducks. Children are making excellent progress because the childminder is skilled and uses her understanding of child development to promote all areas of their play and learning.

Babies' individual routines are followed with regard to their eating and sleeping patterns and they benefit from the close relationships that have been formed with the childminder. For example, babies readily exchange lots of smiles with the childminder and they enjoy to snuggle into her arms as she gently kisses their head.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The childminder has considered how she can make her home and practice inclusive and welcoming to all. For example, the welcome leaflet given to parents is set out in many different languages. Non stereotypical play is encouraged and all children can freely access all the toys. Children take part in simple craft and cooking activities as they discover how other countries, cultures and religions celebrate festivals and follow traditions. For example, during Divali children dress up in traditional Indian costumes and help to prepare and eat Indian food. Play resources such as, books, puzzles, dolls and small world figures promote positive images of different cultures. The childminder demonstrates a positive and caring approach caring for a child with a learning difficulty and/or a disability. She would first ascertain what the child's needs are and whether she can meet these, by looking at her home, her own family and other

minding commitments. However, children currently have limited access to resources to develop their awareness of disability. The childminder is happy to work in partnership with parents, professionals and outside agencies in order to support children.

An excellent partnership with parents contributes significantly to the children's wellbeing. Parents are provided with a well written set of policies and procedures including information about the required complaints procedure and log. Written agreements are drawn up and this helps ensure parents are informed of the childminder's role and responsibilities in caring for their children. Excellent systems are in place for sharing information with parents, keeping them up-to-date on their child's progress and development. For example, the childminder exchanges general information and regulatory paperwork daily, and also uses a contact journal to record the general routines of younger children. Parents who provided written references are clearly very happy with the service provided. In particular they say the childminder is 'reliable, trustworthy and has a common sense approach to caring for children'. Overall they feel the childminder provides 'excellent care for their children'.

Children's behaviour is excellent and they are polite as they are encouraged to use their good manners at all times. The childminder routinely praises the children, spends time talking and playing with them and ensures that they are provided with a wide range of interesting activities and experiences. As a result children are well occupied and do not become bored or restless. The childminder has realistic expectations of children's behaviour which are appropriate to each child's age and level of understanding. Children know and understand the simple house rules and boundaries set by the childminder and as a consequence she only needs to remind children or re-direct them occasionally. As a last resort the childminder speaks calmly, and gives a full explanation before using 'time out' to good effect.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the well organised approach of the childminder. All documentation, which contributes to children's safety, health and well being, is accurately maintained. The childminder is aware of the need to maintain confidentiality in all areas of childminding and has separate files for each child. The attendance register contains the arrival and departure times of minded children. The childminder has a set of well written policies and procedures, which she regularly reviews and updates, and share with parents. These policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The childminder updates her childcare knowledge by reading literature such as 'Who Minds' and the Bexley Childminding Association newsletters and is scheduled to attend training on the new Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder has good arrangements in place to ensure that children are safe and secure whilst in her care. For example, children are always under her direct supervision and never left with un-vetted adults. The childminder ensures children have a good balance of outdoor and indoor activities. Space within the home setting is organised well and children are able to choose from a range of resources which promote independent selection. The childminder plans her day around the school run and the individual needs of the children she minds. As a result children feel settled and are cared for in a safe, stimulating and loving environment. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two recommendations were set.

As a result children now have opportunities to play with a satisfactory range of resources and activities which help promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Written agreements, including consent for outings and the use of public transport, are completed with parents and are accessible at all times.

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:

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):

- extend the range of resources which help develop children's awareness and promote positive images of disability
- update the wording of the child protection policy to ensure it complies with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures

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