

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136584
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	Stephanie Graves
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 1996. She lives with her husband and two children aged 15 and 18 in Chislehurst, Kent. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house 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 four children under eight on a part-time basis. The childminder attends the local toddler groups and activity centres.

The family has a pet cat.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from effective hygiene procedures. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands at the appropriate times and the childminder encourages them to dry their hands properly before eating food. Her nappy changing procedures are effective and she uses

antibacterial spray on surfaces to ensure they remain hygienically clean. Accident and medication records are in place, although these do not always contain the required detail and have not been maintained clearly. This could affect children's health needs through incomplete records. Children are well cared for if they become ill and those with infectious ailments do not attend the setting. This helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children enjoy physical activity, for instance, through regular visits to the park or activity centres. Good sleep routines are encouraged for very young children and others enjoy opportunities to rest in comfortable surroundings. This means their wellbeing is promoted.

Children have access to drinks at all times to help keep them hydrated. The childminder encourages healthy options regarding the food they eat. They enjoy helping to prepare some meals and the childminder talks to them about food that is good for them. This raises their awareness of healthy eating. They are offered a range of dishes with fresh vegetables and fresh fruit and yoghurt for snacks and desserts. Children's dietary requirements are addressed because the childminder works with parents to ensure their needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children can move around and play within a safe and secure environment. This is because the childminder ensures they are unable to access areas not used for childminding and makes sure they are unable to leave the premises unattended. The toys and resources are checked regularly for safety. Children are supervised closely at all times, which helps to prevent accidental injury. Written parental consents help to keep children safe and include permission for the childminder to transport them in a vehicle. Effective measures help to reduce the risk of children accessing hazardous materials. This is because the childminder ensures any potentially dangerous household items are stored out of children's reach. She ensures the safety of very young children before accompanying others to the toilet, to ensure they do not come to any harm. Children are developing an awareness of how to help keep themselves safe. This is because the childminder explains why some procedures are necessary, such as why they must not throw toys around and the importance of sitting properly at the table when eating. The emergency evacuation procedure is practised with the children and helps them develop a sense of personal safety.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted through the childminder's awareness of the necessary procedures to keep them safe at all times. For example, although she has not fully updated her knowledge of local procedures for safeguarding children, she demonstrates a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what to do in the event of a concern. A list of important up-to-date contact numbers is in place to ensure appropriate action can be taken. This helps to ensure that children's welfare is the childminder's priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and make themselves at home as they play and choose their favourite activities. They have good relationships with the childminder who spends much of her time playing and talking with them. A balanced range of toys and resources cover all areas of learning and include turn taking games, construction, puzzles, soft toys, role play, art and craft, mark making, books and small world play. The variety helps to ensure children have plenty to help them learn and develop. Children are happy and involved as they play together. For instance

they can be heard excitedly calling out 'I win, I win' as they play a turn taking game together and they enjoy the childminder's involvement as she joins in. She asks many questions to help extend learning and develop children's language skills. This includes asking questions relating to their home experiences and what they are doing during activities. The childminder has a good awareness of the kinds of experiences children need to learn and progress. For instance, she has regard to the Birth to three matters framework so that play experiences can be adapted to meet the needs of the younger children in her care.

Very young children use their senses to explore, for instance, as they methodically pick toy animals up from the floor and place in a container and then tip them out again. They demonstrate curiosity as they observe the things that go on around them, such as the childminder playing with other children. They have opportunities to engage with others to communicate, for instance, as the childminder talks to them about what they are playing with and as they play with other children. The childminder encourages children to play purposefully and as a result they persist at their chosen activities, such as attempting to complete a puzzle. Children enjoy stories and eagerly contribute to themes. For example, the childminder asks questions to help children think and respond and complete sentences. This encourages them to guess what is going to happen next and identify key elements of the story. They enjoy interactive books, where they can press tabs on the side to make sounds to fit the story line. They identify animals, such as 'zebra' 'elephant' and 'dog' and the childminder talks to them about the sounds animals make. This encourages children to make connections through their play and learning experiences.

Overall the childminder provides a good range of experiences that promote children's physical, emotional, social and intellectual abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are equally welcomed, acknowledged and affirmed by the childminder. She attentively promotes their individual needs and divides her attention equally between the children she cares for. As a result they demonstrate a sense of belonging and self assurance. Toys and resources promote positive images of diversity and children have opportunities to learn about the local community and the wider world through regular outings to local toddler groups and activity centres. This means they develop an awareness of the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children learn the difference between right from wrong, because the childminder is a good role model who manages their behaviour in a way that promotes their confidence and self-esteem. She praises them regularly, and encourages them to adopt good manners. Positive behaviour strategies are used and children learn to follow simple house rules, which helps them to understand the expected behaviour boundaries.

Children benefit from effective support between the childminding and home environments, because the childminder and parents work closely together to meet their needs. For example, the childminder offers a clear settling in policy to help support parents in ensuring their children feel settled and relaxed in her care. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress on a daily basis and the childminder takes positive steps to ensure they are kept well informed through the range of policies and procedures provided. An effective two-way flow of information helps to provide consistency of care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play happily within a warm, caring and homely childminding environment. They feel secure with the childminder and enjoy her company as they access a good range of daily play and learning experiences. She ensures children are closely supervised and able to play within safe boundaries. Although some improvement is required in relation to maintaining accident and medication records effectively and further updating her knowledge of issues relating to safeguarding children, she promotes the safety and welfare of the children in her care at all times. The required records are in place for children, the registration certificate is displayed and the childminder ensures her records of attendance include clear arrival and departure times for children. Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted through a good range of written policies and procedures. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder received several recommendations. These included, ensuring that her driving licence is available for inspection purposes, requesting written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, maintaining the smoke detector on the first floor in working order, obtaining written permission from parents for transporting children in a vehicle and ensuring children's times of arrival and departure are recorded.

The recommendations have been addressed. The childminder produced the required documents, including her driving license, consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and transporting children in a vehicle. She has also ensured a smoke detector is sited on the ground floor and ensures children's times of arrival and departure are recorded.

The childminder has taken appropriate steps towards improving her practice and ensuring children are safe and well cared for 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):

- ensure accident and medication records are clearly maintained and contain the required detail
- continue to update knowledge and understanding of current issues regarding safeguarding children.

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