

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	201624
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori

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 2001. She lives with her two daughters aged 12 and seven years in a residential area of Hastings. The ground floor is generally used for childminding although children have access to the whole house. There is also a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding five children for a variety of part time sessions including two who are under five years. The childminder also cares for two children who are over eight years, also on a part time basis.

The family keep a caged bird, a tortoise, a dog and a hamster as pets. There is an area of the garden sectioned off for use by the dog.

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 offered a wide range of nutritious snacks and meals and are encouraged to try a variety of new tastes. They are very well supported to understand the importance of healthy eating; for example, they regularly discuss the idea of eating five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Children also have constant access to drinks. Meal times are very sociable occasions. The childminder sits up at the table with the children and they chat happily whilst learning very good table manners.

Children are cared for in a very clean environment and are learning very good personal hygiene practices. They understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before each meal.

Children are effectively protected by the well thought out arrangements regarding the care of sick children and the administration of medicines. Whilst the required consent and information are maintained, these records are sometimes unclear. The childminder has valid first aid certificate and is therefore able to treat children in case of a minor accident.

Children enjoy very regular opportunities to take part in physical play. They make very good use of the garden and are provided with a wide range of physical play equipment including a mini-trampoline. Children also enjoy trips to the local parks where they play running games and use the fixed equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected by a number of safety precautions within the childminder's home. These include the use of socket covers and fire guards. The childminder generally has a very good understanding of issues relating to safety. Her supervision of children is entirely appropriate to ensure their safety whilst allowing them to explore and develop independence. Children are also learning how to protect themselves through the childminder's on-going advice and support.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to protect children from the risk of fire. Smoke detectors are situated throughout the premises and there is a fire blanket in the kitchen. The childminder has clearly identified the escape routes from the house.

Children play with toys and equipment that are in good condition and appropriate for their age and stage of development. They are able to easily and safely access most of the toys themselves.

The childminder has a thorough understanding of her responsibilities to report any child protection concerns. She is confident in her ability to notice the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and has the contact details to enable her to make a referral.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children form extremely warm relationships with the childminder. They clearly enjoy her friendly, light-hearted manner. They are comfortable in her home and confidently select the activities they wish to take part in. They approach the childminder readily for attention and enjoy the

praise and encouragement they receive. They benefit greatly from her commitment to providing an entirely child-centred environment. They have wonderful opportunities to make choices and to explore and discover for themselves. The childminder acts very promptly to provide additional resources and support to extend children's play.

The childminder skilfully plans activities and opportunities which address children's all round development. Activities which are routinely available include a variety of arts and crafts, cooking, role play and dressing up, construction, small world play, reading and listening to stories and playing with musical instruments. Children also enjoy a wide range of outings; some to give opportunities for physical exercise and some with a more educational purpose, for example walks to appreciate nature.

Children flourish in the care of the childminder as a result of her total commitment to identifying and meeting their individual needs. She has a very good knowledge of the way in which children develop and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the individual personality of each child. As a result, they are happy, settling and extremely well supported to develop good self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave beautifully and are very well supported to play co-operatively and take turns. They respond very well to the childminder's calm and consistent manner. She has a very good understanding of ways in which to positively manage behaviour.

Children play with an extremely good range of toys that provide positive images of people from the local community and wider world, including those with disabilities. In addition, they take part in activities to mark a range of festivals and special days. The childminder has a clear commitment to providing equal opportunities and this includes respecting children and treating them as individuals.

The childminder has appropriate procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She has a very positive attitude towards ensuring the needs of all children are met.

The childminder does not have effective arrangements in place to give parents written information about her service or her responsibilities as a childminder. Whilst she understands the procedures to be followed should she receive a complaint, this information is not routinely shared with parents. However, the childminder maintains very positive and friendly relationships with parents; both parties take time to verbally exchange information about the children when they are dropped off and collected.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder is committed to improving her knowledge and understanding of good child care practices. She has attended the mandatory registration course and holds a valid first aid certificate.

Space within the home is well used, encouraging children to move around safely and independently. By skilfully managing her time, the childminder effectively ensures that each

individual child receives the care and attention they need. As a result of this children are happy, settled and confident.

The childminder maintains all the required written records and, other than the medication records, these are generally clear and well ordered. This contributes to the effective management of her service.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection a recommendation was made that the childminder improve the way in which children's attendance is recorded. A clear and comprehensive register of attendance is now maintained. This contributes to the effective organisation of the setting.

The childminder was also asked to re-position her fire blanket to ensure that it is easily accessible. She has successfully addressed this issue and, as a result, children are more effectively safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- improve the clarity of written medication records
- consider providing parents and carers with written information about the service offered including the procedures to be followed should they wish to make a complaint.

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