

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	506307
Inspection date	02 August 2007
Inspector	Mandy Mooney

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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband, three adult children and a 14 year old son. They live in a five bedroom house in Rochester, in Kent. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time. There are currently five children under eight years on roll, all of whom are cared for on a part time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a clear understanding about the importance of good hygiene practices and the home environment is clean, brought about by suitable practices that protect children from illness and the risk of cross infection. For example, anti-bacterial spray is used on surfaces and if a child has had any sort of 'bug' then the indoor handles are also wiped with antibacterial

spray to minimise the potential spread of germs. Children are encouraged to have appropriate independent self help and hygiene routines, such as regular hand washing and some children brush their teeth after meals, although this is not consistent amongst all children. On occasions the childminder and children have discussions about the importance of having a healthy lifestyle and this reinforces the benefits of this.

Children's medical health is generally appropriately protected. The childminder obtains sufficient information about children's medical needs before they are left in her care. She holds a current first aid certificate and has written consent to acquire emergency medical treatment if required. However, some weaknesses are evident. The childminder keeps accurate records pertaining to accidents, which are shared with parents. She records existing injuries, however, she only records injuries that leave a visible mark on the child's skin or head injuries. This means that if a child has an accident where no mark is apparent, then a potential injury may be missed. A record of medication administered to children is maintained, this includes the time and dosage. However, written prior consent to administer medication is not in place. The childminder has a verbal agreement with parents about the administration of medication but this is not confirmed in writing. This is a breach of regulation. The childminder acknowledges this is something she has overlooked and she demonstrates a positive attitude to ensuring this is rectified with immediate effect, thus ensuring children's health is satisfactorily promoted.

Children have regular opportunities to take part in physical play and to get fresh air. They enjoy the walks to and from school and make use of the fully enclosed garden. They also make use of local facilities to use up energy and have fun. This contributes to them having a healthy lifestyle. Children are provided with a varied and nutritious diet which complies with the wishes of parents and considers the likes and dislikes of the children. Juice and water are always available to children and in the hotter weather children enjoy ice lollies to quench their thirst.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. They have sufficient space to move around freely, making choices about their play. They have access to the necessary facilities, such as toilets, which they are able to independently access. Children have access to a wide range of good quality toys and resources. Many are stored at the children's level to encourage independent choice and decision making. They are sorted into age groups for safety and age appropriateness.

Children are well protected from the risk of accidental injury both in the home and on outings because the childminder identifies and reduces hazards by carrying out an assessment of the home every day before the children arrive. She pays particular attention to areas that may have changed overnight, for example, ensuring the bird bath has not accumulated water overnight. The childminder and older children are vigilant that little bits should be kept away from the babies because of the potential choking hazard this poses. The childminder double checks underneath chairs just in case any bits are concealed. Effective fire systems are in place, this includes maintained smoke alarms and a fire blanket in the kitchen. The childminder has devised a fire evacuation procedure and a poster is displayed on the wall depicting the door to use in the event of a fire. This was drawn by one of the children. The evacuation procedure is practised with the children and this ensures it is effective in keeping them safe. Older children know they must play appropriately with the toys and provide a good example to the younger ones. Children know the rules and boundaries when outdoors; they are aware of how to keep themselves and others safe when walking to and from school.

The childminder's clear understanding of child protection issues, gained through keeping herself aware of necessary information, help to safeguard children. The availability of local procedures and guidance also helps to prevent delays in children and families receiving appropriate support should this be necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop good relationships with the childminder who is responsive to their individual needs and ensures their welfare is promoted. Children are confident in asking the childminder for support or help in their play, for example, when finding a particular piece for a game. Children enjoy playing with construction toys, such as marble run and Lego, using their imagination well as they create new things. Activities and opportunities are planned around the children's interests and to offer them a good variety, for example, during role play and creative activities. They also get some opportunities to use local facilities, such as a local play centre and park. Younger children enjoy going to a toddler group where they get the opportunity to further develop their social skills.

Although the childminder has some awareness of the Birth to three matters framework, it is not actively used in the provision and therefore the benefits to the younger children are not evident.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are included and encouraged to have a positive view of the wider community. The childminder endeavours to ensure that all children's needs are well met. The childminder takes an active role in community activities and also in what the children are doing. This includes attending local fundraising events and children's assemblies and plays if the parents are unable to make it. This contributes to helping the children feel valued. She teaches the children the importance of respecting themselves, others and the local community by reinforcing the important message of looking after the environment, such as not throwing their rubbish on the ground. Children are free to choose what they want to play with and the childminder ensures gender stereotyping is minimised because toys are not labelled specifically for boys or girls. Children's awareness of different people in the community is sufficiently supported because they have access to a range of resources to depict a positive image of diversity. On occasions, children come home from school assemblies talking about a particular festival and the childminder encourages them to share their knowledge for the benefit of all.

The childminder is aware that some children have specific needs and is proactive in ensuring that the appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. She has much experience of caring for children with specific needs and works closely with parents and others to ensure children are fully supported in meeting their full potential.

Children behave very well. Children respond to the childminder's consistent calm approach to managing behaviour. Strategies used are reflective of the written policy in place and children behave well because they are involved in agreeing the rules. Strategies include using a warning system and having a discussion circle where children get the opportunity to talk about what has happened, why it is unacceptable and how the situation could be dealt with better. Children are also encouraged to apologise to each other after a disagreement.

Children benefit from the friendly informal relationships between the childminder and parents. Good consideration is given to consistency of care. Daily discussions help to make sure that parents are kept informed of routines, such as how long children have slept, what they have eaten as well as their general disposition.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a very experienced and dedicated childminder who keeps herself up-to-date with changes and advancements in childcare through her membership to the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and reading relevant literature in this area.

Space and resources are organised appropriately to meet the children's needs and ensure children are comfortable within the setting. A daily attendance record is maintained and this includes the actual times of arrival and departure for each child. This contributes to ensuring required ratios are maintained and the conditions of registration are complied with.

Most required records for the safe management of the provision are in place and stored in a confidential way, with the exception of consent to administer medication.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation for good practice was raised. All records required for the safe management of the provision are in place, with the exception of written consent to administer medication to the children. This contributes to promoting children's welfare. Records are stored in a way that ensures confidentiality.

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 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):

- ensure prior written consent to administer medication is in place

- keep a record of all accidents, including those where no visible mark is left
- consider using a framework for the younger children, such as Birth to three matters

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