



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	510364
Inspection date	11 September 2006
Inspector	Alison Weaver
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 1994. She is completing an NVQ level 3 childcare course. She lives with her husband, one teenage son and two other children aged 10 and 11 years. They live in a house in a residential area of Eastbourne close to shops, schools and parks. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for three children at any one time and is currently minding four pre-school children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a clean home where they learn the importance of good personal hygiene through effective everyday routines. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. The good levels of hygiene in the home help prevent illness and infection in the children. Good practices include cleaning the table before the children use it for eating their lunches and ensuring work surfaces in the kitchen are kept clean. The childminder has appropriate procedures for the care of sick and injured children, which ensure that their welfare is given priority.

Children enjoy regular outdoor activities in the garden and on outings, to help them develop good control of their bodies and improve their physical skills. Toddlers develop their physical skills as the childminder supports and encourages them to walk using suitable equipment and domestic furniture to help them. They show increasing skills as they manoeuvre push along toys around the furniture and in the garden. These younger children enjoy crawling after the balls in the garden. They have fun throwing them and letting them roll down the slope. The children show increasing manipulative skills as they use different tools and toys as they play.

Children enjoy quieter activities where they can rest and relax. The childminder ensures she follows the individual sleep routines for younger children so that they stay healthy and receive consistent care.

The children bring all their own snacks and meals, which are kept fresh by using ice packs. The childminder uses activities to develop children's understanding of healthy eating and good hygiene. They learn about the importance of washing hands to get rid of germs and the need to brush their teeth. They also talk about what foods are good to eat as they visit the local shops and do food-tasting activities. The children have ready access to drinks to prevent them becoming dehydrated, particularly in hot weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children play in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Overall, the childminder shows a good level of safety awareness and minimises risks for children effectively. Some hazardous items in the toilet are accessible to children. The childminder supervises the children closely to ensure they stay safe at all times. An appropriate evacuation plan, smoke alarms and a fire blanket contribute to keeping children safe in the event of a fire.

Children make choices from a good range of safe and suitable toys and equipment, the majority of which are easily accessible. The childminder checks that the toys are safe and appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children present. Outdoor equipment is regularly checked and well maintained so that children play free from harm. As the children play, the childminder reminds them of how to stay safe when using particular toys and equipment. She

ensures that she makes older children aware that they need to play with their smaller toys away from younger children.

The childminder has clear procedures for outings to help keep children safe whilst in her care; for example, child restraints are used, emergency contacts are in place and a first aid kit is taken on outings. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they cross roads when on outings. The childminder reinforces sun safety effectively by ensuring that children wear hats and have sun cream on to protect them.

The childminder has the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is promoted. She ensures that only authorised persons collect the children at the end of their day, making good use of photos for identification purposes. She has a good understanding of signs of child abuse and is fully aware of her responsibilities to the children. She is aware of the need to report any child protection concerns. This contributes to the safeguarding of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy themselves in the relaxed and homely environment. They quickly make themselves at home, choosing from a good variety of toys and equipment, which challenge and stimulate them appropriately. They move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas so they get lots of play in the fresh air. They become absorbed playing in the sand pit with different tools. Toddlers enjoy exploring the environment and riding in the car.

Children experience different crafts including collages, painting, play dough and leaf rubbings. They make 'spider's webs' using thread and blunt needles. They also enjoy cooking and musical activities. Toddlers like to press the buttons on toys to make different musical sounds.

The childminder actively promotes learning through play as she produces a six weekly plan of activities for the children, focusing on what they learn. The childminder devotes her time to playing with the children and supporting them in their play. As they have fun, the children develop and learn new skills, such as recognising colours and counting. The childminder introduces new mathematical concepts to them as they play, such as sorting, matching and simple calculation. Children learn that two and one makes four as they play in the car ball pit. The childminder asks the children questions such as 'How many does that make, if you have four already and now have two more?'

Children also develop their vocabulary and learn about letter sounds. The childminder spends time talking to the children and uses very good questioning techniques to encourage them to express themselves. She reinforces words to help develop their speech. As a result of the childminder's clear planning and positive interaction, the children make good progress and develop well. The children play well together and build good relationships with the childminder. They communicate easily together and children thrive in the atmosphere of continual praise and encouragement.

The childminder plans a wide range of fun and interesting activities for all the children. These include outings to explore their surroundings where they visit local shops, parks, farms and duck ponds. They go to pick strawberries and visit the steam railway. Younger children's social skills develop as they regularly visit local toddler groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards equal opportunities. She values children as individuals and takes into account their needs when caring for them. Children's awareness of the wider world is adequately promoted by the use of some resources that show positive images of diversity and cultural differences. The childminder chats to the children about differences in a positive way when any issues arise.

The childminder has limited experience of working with children with special needs but is fully aware of the need to work closely with parents and relevant agencies to ensure that she provides appropriate care for each child.

Children benefit from a lot of praise and encouragement given by the childminder. The children get excited as they choose a sticker for their book when they do something well. The children develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour as the childminder explains about right and wrong to them. The childminder discusses any concerns with parents so that they can work together to help any children having problems with behaviour.

The childminder works closely with parents to support children and meet their individual needs. There is a daily verbal exchange of information to help provide consistent care for each child. The childminder also uses a helpful daily care diary to keep parents informed about their child's day. Parents are encouraged to include their own comments in the diary so that the childminder is made aware of anything important that may affect the child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from being cared for by a well-organised childminder. She plans effectively for the children but remains flexible to take into account their individual needs and interests. The children receive good adult support and attention, which helps them feel secure and settled. All the relevant and required documents are in place and well maintained. The records help support the care of children and comply with regulations.

The childminder verbally discusses her practices and procedures with new parents. This enables parents to have a general understanding of the childminder's service. It also helps promote consistency of care for the child.

The childminder shows commitment to improving her knowledge as she regularly attends further training, including courses and workshops on health and safety, child protection and play for learning. She is currently completing a childcare course leading to a recognised qualification.

This ongoing training results in the childminder continually developing the care of minded children. 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 was asked to increase the resources that show positive images of race, culture, gender and disability. The childminder has purchased some books and dolls which show such images, to promote children's awareness of differences in society. However, this remains an area that needs to be further developed.

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):

- improve safety with regard to the toilet area
- continue to develop the range of resources that show positive images of race, religion, culture and disability.

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