

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 126054  
**Inspection date** 09 August 2007  
**Inspector** Virginia Cooper

**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](http://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 2000. She lives with her husband and three children in Northfleet, Kent. The whole 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 five children at any one time and is currently minding six school age children, all on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family has a pet hamster.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a clean and well-ordered environment allowing them to move around easily and safely. The childminder adopts sensible routines within the home to help prevent the transmission

of communicable diseases. For example, surfaces are kept clean, she prepares and stores food sensibly and children have their own towels.

The childminder teaches children through the daily routine about personal hygiene. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands after playing in the garden, before eating and after using the lavatory. This helps children learn about good personal hygiene and to adopt healthy routines.

The childminder will care for children who are off-colour if they are happy to come, for example, if they have colds. If they are contagious and are for example, suffering sickness or diarrhoea, they do not come to the childminder, ensuring other children are not at risk of cross-infection. The childminder ensures she has written permission before she administers any medication, the dose and time is recorded to ensure parents are well informed and their children are not given anything that is unsuitable.

The childminder holds a current first aid qualification; any accidents and any first aid that is administered whilst the children are in her care is recorded. Parents sign the entry and this results in them being well informed about what has happened to their child.

Children enjoy plenty of fresh air; they regularly play in the garden or go to the park; this ensures they get plenty of physical exercise. The childminder occasionally manages to take minded children swimming if she is caring for a child she considers can cope with the water after discussion with parents. This helps to give them a life-saving skill.

Generally the childminder has agreed with parents that they provide their children's lunch; she sends home any food they have not eaten so parents are aware of the amounts eaten. She provides snacks that are usually fresh fruit. Older children who attend after school receive a cooked evening meal. The childminder considers she has good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy and nutritious diet. She uses fresh vegetables and encourages all children to try a little bit if it is something new to them, encouraging them to be adventurous with food. Children always have access to drinks, usually squash; they recognise their own cups and these are re-filled regularly to prevent them from being thirsty.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy premises that are bright, welcoming and maintained to a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. The conservatory doubles as a playroom and most of the toys are stored here. They are easy for children to access enabling them to make choices about what they play with. Toys are safe, clean and well maintained, enabling children to play safely.

The childminder regularly carries out a risk assessment of the premises. The potential hazards and risks are identified and safety equipment is in place to prevent accidents. Medicines are stored quite high up in a cupboard; the lock on this is quite high but older children may be able to reach it. She carries out a visual check of the premises each day to maintain the safety standards. Children understand that some rules are applied to keep them safe, for example, they know that the childminder has to be present if they use the trampoline in the garden. This is beginning to help them understand about taking personal responsibility for their own safety. The childminder has considered the children's safety in the event of a fire. There are smoke alarms providing an early alert in a fire and an evacuation plan is written. Children practise fire drills regularly.

The childminder has recently attended a child protection course to ensure her knowledge is updated, helping her safeguard children from harm. She understands the signs and symptoms of abuse and feels confident that she would recognise if a child needs protection. She knows who to contact if she is ever concerned about a child in her care.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The childminder is familiar with the framework Birth to three matters and has undertaken training enabling her to provide an appropriate service for children under three years old.

Children make choices about the activities they undertake; the childminder helps them gather the equipment they want to undertake their chosen activity. They are equally at home playing independently or with her help. She is a skilled practitioner and senses when to leave them, and when to extend their play by joining in. Children play board games; they take turns and play co-operatively with one another. The children are happy and very 'at home' in the childminder's company. Mixed children get along well with the childminder's own children and it is clear that friendships are made. Children like to play make believe and use their imaginations playing with small world toys, for example, dinosaurs. They are encouraged to be creative; they enjoy making mosaic bead pictures, greetings cards and pictures. They undertake outings in the school holidays; they are going to the cinema later in the week and they visit a large park in Swanley and the library. The childminder is very fair about how she shares her attention between the children; she listens to them carefully promoting their self esteem.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are very comfortable with the childminder; they are treated as an extension of her own family and are clearly well integrated. Children understand they can ask and have their needs met. They receive lots of attention, praise and encouragement and consequently they feel safe and secure.

The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity and has a positive attitude towards diversity. Children are treated with respect and made to feel good about themselves. There is a range of resources that reflect our multi-cultural society positively encouraging children to appreciate that everyone is different.

Children with special needs are welcome providing the childminder considers she can provide an appropriate service. She has a willing and 'can do' attitude and is able to work flexibly to accommodate a child with additional needs.

Children are happy and their behaviour is good; they play well together and are able to share and cooperate with one another. The childminder rarely experiences difficulties with children's behaviour because they are kept busy and amused. She has a written behaviour management statement that explains how she will adopt appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, to help children understand right from wrong. She believes in calm intervention, good explanations, and being a good role model. Children are given praise and encouragement so they understand which behaviour to repeat.

The childminder has a good relationship with parents allowing her to discuss matters important to the children and their families. Most communication with parents is verbal; however, the

childminder is happy to write a contact book if parents wish. She has a service statement that details her complaints procedure. The childminder undertakes lots of art and craft activities with the children and they take their work home enabling parents to see what their children are doing. The childminder is considering how these activities might be used to provide parents with a permanent record of their child's development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The childminder is currently undertaking a further childcare qualification and holds a current paediatric first aid certificate. She is about to renew her first aid qualification shortly. Her willingness to undertake on-going training ensures her knowledge is updated and relevant. All adults in the household have Criminal Records Bureau checks to help establish they are suitable to care for children.

The childminder is very well organised and has a positive and clear vision about the service she wants to provide. The environment is well organised and carefully prepared to ensure children's individual needs are met. The routine affords the children opportunities to participate in a range of activities both inside and outdoors. It is important to the childminder that the children are emotionally secure, enjoy their time with her and feel able to treat her house like a second home. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

All the documentation the childminder requires to provide a good service are well maintained and kept confidentially. Her service statement is always available for parents to read informing them of the service she provides. Parents know how to make a complaint if they have any concerns.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection one recommendation was made that relates to Standard 13. It was recommended that the childminder update her knowledge of child protection procedures; she has undertaken a course recently and is now well informed about what is required of her and who to contact if she has concerns about a child in her care.

As a consequence of this training the childminder is now better prepared to safeguard children from harm.

### **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):

- consider the height of the lock on the cupboard where medicines are stored
- consider a method of providing parents with a permanent record of their child's development.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)