

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	125992
Inspection date	07 December 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.

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 partner and school aged children in Gravesend. 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 seven children, two of these are present four days a week and the others are cared for on a more 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 cat and two rabbits.

The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children whose first language is not English.

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 very happy with the childminder; they are comfortable and 'at home'. She is very attentive and meets their needs promptly. The childminder works in co-operation with parents when children are potty training to ensure a consistent approach.

Children learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine, for example, they wash their hands after playing outside, feeding the pets and before eating.

The childminder does not care for children who are contagious ensuring others are not at risk of cross-infection. Children who become poorly whilst with the childminder are comforted, and made comfortable, until their parents are able to collect them. The childminder does not generally administer medication; however, she understands the correct procedures and has the necessary record book available should the situation arise.

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

The childminder encourages children to expand their physical skills through regular outdoor play and exercise; they love to go on walks and collect leaves to make pictures.

The childminder has agreed with parents that generally she provides the children's lunch and snacks. She ensures that the food is healthy and nutritious and parents know what their child has eaten. Children are offered new foods to try and the childminder is successful at encouraging them to be more adventurous in what they will eat. Children are offered drinks regularly to prevent them being thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe, secure and child friendly. The downstairs is organised to provide areas for quiet activities and areas for more active play. The back room where most play takes place is spacious enabling children to move about easily.

The childminder is very safety conscious and safety equipment is in place to prevent accidents, for example, socket covers and safety gates to prevent children accessing areas that are unsuitable. Children choose what they want to play with from a good range of well-maintained toys; the childminder checks these regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child. The childminder uses wrist straps when they are on outings enabling her to keep children safely nearby. The childminder is very attentive and supervises the children closely to keep them safe. Children are reminded how to keep themselves safe, for example, to take care when climbing onto a chair.

The childminder ensures she keeps updated about her responsibility with regard to safeguarding children from harm. She has good procedures in place if she should ever have a concern about a child and has all the relevant phone numbers to hand.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a close bond with the childminder; they are treated like an extension of her own family. This relationship supports children's growing independence and instils confidence amongst the children. The childminder has a good understanding of child development and the importance of providing age appropriate activities, therefore, children have opportunities to learn whilst they are playing and enjoying themselves.

The childminder asks the children what they want to do and facilitates their play successfully. She often has a plan in mind of what to do but is equally happy following a child's interest if they become absorbed by a particular activity. She has undertaken training about the framework Birth to three matters and understands the importance of younger children exploring natural materials. They often go on nature walks and make pictures with the things they collect. The childminder encourages children's communication skills by reflecting what they say and expanding their vocabulary. Children are encouraged to be creative and the childminder gives them lots of praise, showing genuine interest in what they draw.

Children learn naturally because the childminder takes opportunities to talk about colours, shapes, count and sounding out letters as they play. They also celebrate a variety of festivals from around the world learning about other people's cultures. The childminder recently threw a Halloween party that all the minded children were invited to. They all helped to decorate the house, make party food and became very involved in the organisation of the party giving them a good sense of belonging.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

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. They happily talk about things that are important to them, for example their home and family.

The childminder has a willing attitude about caring for children with special needs. She will accept children as long as she is able to provide an appropriate service that meets their needs.

The childminder adopts appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, to help children understand right from wrong. Generally children behave well because they are kept well stimulated with a variety of activities. The childminder is a good role model; she is very calm and the children respond to the tranquil environment positively. Occasionally if children disagree about a toy she will remove it for a short while and then re-introduce it suggesting new ways to play. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement so they know which behaviour to repeat.

The childminder has a good relationship with the parents of the children she looks after. She keeps them well informed of their child's progress. Each parent is given a pack that includes her service statement and policies and procedures so they have a good understanding of the kind of service she provides. She appreciates that some parents are anxious about returning to work and she encourages them to ring her as often as they need, to ensure they feel confident about their care arrangements. Some open references state that the childminder has made their return to work much easier. The childminder obtains written parental permission where necessary, for example, to transport children in a vehicle ensuring parents are well informed. She has not

yet obtained written permission to take photographs of children, however, parents have agreed verbally.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All adults in the household have Criminal Records Bureau checks to help establish they are suitable to care for children. The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification. The childminder is very well organised and keeps all the documentation that relates to her childminding business together and confidentially. She keeps all the required records and obtains parental permission where necessary; consequently, parents are kept well informed.

The daily routine includes free play, outdoor play, planned activities, rest and meal times keeping the children busy and happy. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The childminder is treasurer for the Northfleet Childminder Group; regular contact with other childminders enables her to discuss practice issues and keep updated with new legislation.

The childminder understands the importance of confidentiality and a good working relationship with parents. Parents provide detailed information about their child to ensure the childminder can provide an appropriate service. They provide telephone numbers for emergency contact.

The childminder has a written service statement; there is information about equal opportunities, behaviour management, safeguarding children and other information about the service provided. The childminder understands she has a duty to inform the registering body of any changes to her circumstances that might affect the welfare of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made relating to Standard 12. The childminder was asked to obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

The childminder has addressed this issue, thereby improving her service delivery.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents to take photographs of 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