



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	102664
Inspection date	16 May 2006
Inspector	Heather Tanswell
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 outstanding. 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 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 13 on a new development close to the centre of Helston, in Cornwall. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding 11 children; one child aged under one full time; three aged under five part time; and seven aged over five after school on different days throughout the week. The childminder walks or drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She attends the local parent and toddler group, takes children to the local library, parks and tourist attractions.

She is a member of the Cornwall Childminding Association (CCMA) and National Childminding Association (NCMA). She is a member of an approved childminding network.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain an excellent understanding of hygiene and receive support to be independent in their personal care. Children know they must wear aprons to keep themselves clean when taking part in messy play or cooking. They learn how to wash their hands thoroughly, receive great praise for their efforts in becoming potty trained and know why the childminder uses disposable gloves and wipes at nappy changing times. Children are very well cared for on premises where standards of hygiene are very high. Children are protected from the risk of cross infection by the childminder who ensures all areas of the home are scrupulously clean before children arrive. Shoes are taken off at the door to keep the floors where young children crawl free from soiling. Daily routines such as washing all the toys handled by the youngest children keep toys and resources clean and safe to use. The childminder has a clear policy about children who are sick or who have infectious diseases. These policies are shared with parents at registration to ensure there are good arrangements in place to care for children who are ill. The childminder is trained in administering first aid and has detailed permissions and records in place regarding the administration of medication to children.

Children are encouraged to enjoy their food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. As soon as children can handle tools, they help with the preparation of meals and snacks. The childminder is highly aware of how to promote an understanding of healthy eating. A two-weekly menu ensures meals are varied, healthy, balanced and meet their dietary requirements. Meals such as pasta dishes are accompanied by salad and snacks consist of a variety of fresh fruits. Food provided by parents for babies is stored safely and offered at suitable times to meet the child's needs. Regular drinks of fresh drinking water and milk ensure children receive ample fluids to quench their thirst. Diluted drinks of squash provided by parents are offered as an accompaniment with meals to minimise the risk of tooth decay.

Children take part in daily vigorous exercise to develop their physical skills and strength. Children eagerly use an extensive range of tools such as brushes, scissors and knives as part of planned activities and daily routines to develop and refine their skills. For example, a two-year-old proudly cuts up whole fruits into bite size pieces at snack time. Babies receive the encouragement they need to develop the strength and co-ordination to stand, sit and move about. The childminder's excellent use of daily outings to groups, clubs, parks and walks in the open countryside means that children learn to test their skills and develop their stamina on a wide range of equipment and over natural obstacles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children and parents are welcomed into the bright, well-laid out, safe and secure child orientated environment. Children move about freely, protected from harm. Doors remain locked, visitor's identity is checked and workers kept away from areas used by children. The childminder is vigilant about safety and fully implements the detailed risk assessments, which she reviews every month to take into account occasions where additional hazards may occur, for example,

the installation of an outside water tap and the building of a conservatory. The childminder keeps the youngest children close to her at all times, ensuring they are well supervised and safe. For example, when one child needs to use the potty, she takes the baby with her and sits the baby down safely to play, right next to her.

Children safely access a very wide range of good quality toys and equipment to support their play. Age appropriate toys are set up ready for the younger children. Older children freely access additional resources from the garage, laid out with shelves and cupboards to provide a suitable store area. Resources are sorted and labelled for easy access and stay clean in lidded crates. Toys and equipment undergo daily and monthly checks to ensure they are hygienic and suitable.

Children learn successfully from a very young age, how to keep themselves and others safe. The childminder talks to them about being gentle with younger children, why she uses reins for the baby in the pushchair and children practise emergency evacuations with her every two weeks. Children are safeguarded from harm because the childminder has a very clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and shares these with parents. Confidentiality and children's welfare is given high priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder. They are extremely settled and happy in her company. Children show great enthusiasm for the planned activities made ready for their arrival by clapping in delight and laughing with excitement. Activities are imaginatively linked though a theme. For example, as part of a topic on travel children talk about an outing to the beach as they paint pictures and make collages about a picnic, then join in with a story about boats and the seashore. Country walks and visits to children's groups and local places of interest, such as The Eden Project and Flambards, significantly enhance children's learning and physical development. Children learn a great deal through animated discussions and daily routines in which they all play a full part. Children begin to understand why it is important they help tidy away, and as they do, are encouraged to make choices, count and sort, which improves their knowledge, skills, and self-control.

Children's independence and inclusion are promoted very effectively through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities appropriate for their stage of development. When one child shows surprise in how many teeth the baby has, the childminder immediately uses this interest to introduce a discussion about prediction, counting and comparison of the number of teeth they and a doll might have. The childminder shows a very good understanding of how young children learn though copying and acting out what they see and experience. She talks to children about their feelings and need to be gentle with each other. As result, after sharing a loving cuddle with the childminder and a baby, a child fetches a doll and gently rubs its back making soothing noises then offers the doll to the baby. Close and caring relationships become well established, which helps support good behaviour, self-esteem and discipline.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children take part enthusiastically in activities that help them feel part of their own and the wider community they live in through outings and visits to local places of interest. Children have ready access to a broad range of stimulating resources, play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity, acknowledge cultural differences and disability. Children are helped to consider and value the needs of others, because the childminder talks openly about feelings, needs and responses of others. The childminder has a positive attitude to caring for children with learning difficulties, seeks out appropriate support when required, and takes part in courses to enable her to offer additional help in liaison with other professionals and parents.

Children are highly respected as individuals, show confidence in the relaxed atmosphere, and behave very well. Great care is taken to find out more about their family context, personal routines and stages of development to help them settle in well. Children's behaviour is very good. Children help tidy away, are well mannered, friendly and show concern for others feelings. Children's exemplary behaviour is largely due to the high expectations and clear boundaries set by the childminder. Children receive a lot of loving care and attention to their needs and feelings whether spoken or expressed in other ways. Children and childminder enjoy each other's company and spend a lot of time giggling and talking as they play and learn alongside each other.

Very detailed, useful information about the management of the setting helps parents understand how it runs. Children's care needs and personal information is recorded in detail on enrolment and used to influence daily routines. Daily feedback both written and informal keeps parents fully up to date with their child's activities and care. Parents show how much they value the use of activity sheets and the daily diary by using it themselves to share responsibility and record significant events that might influence their child's day. The childminder provides flexible support to parents who have varying work patterns ensuring children receive consistent care. Parents comment positively on her professional approach and the time she takes to help their family feel safe and secure in the knowledge that their child's needs are known and valued.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit greatly from the care and attention of a well-qualified and dedicated childcare worker who keeps fully up to date through training and membership of relevant professional organisations. The childminder uses the experience and knowledge she gains from training, background reading, and any advice she receives from the Network Co-ordinator or other childminders to provide children with a wide range of learning experiences suited for their stages of development. The childminder's regular use of local tourist attractions ensures children enjoy holiday time excursions that are great fun and educational, for example visits to The Eden Project. Children feel totally secure in the well-organised environment and on outings where group numbers are kept low to ensure their safety and enjoyment.

The comprehensive operational plan contains clear, well-written policies and procedures. All the legally required documentation, which contributes to the children's good health, safety

and well-being, is in place, regularly reviewed and made ready for inspection in carefully presented files and folders. The childminder takes great care to ensure all children receive the time, attention and support they need to take their next steps in learning and development. By working directly with and including children in daily routines, the childminder ensures children learn independence and respect for others from a very early age. 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; create a written emergency evacuation procedure following move to new home; ensure that all parents are informed of childminding routine and practice, including policies and procedures, especially those relating behaviour management and caring for sick children, and record information about children's individual ethnicity, cultural and/or personal preferences.

The childminder has written a new emergency evacuation plan for each room in the home. Practises take place regularly, which ensures children know what to do to keep themselves safe if a fire breaks out. The childminder has created a very detailed prospectus that includes all the required policies and procedures. She gives parents a copy at registration and parents comment positively on the time she takes to go through these carefully with them ensuring they are fully informed. The childminder makes good use of professionally produced contracts and registration forms to ensure she records children's background and personal preferences to meet the individual needs of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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