



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	119854
Inspection date	14 June 2006
Inspector	Sue Williams
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1999. She lives with her husband and two children both of whom are school age. The family live in the town of Lake on the Isle of Wight. The entire home is registered, however the childminder chooses to use the ground floor only and a bathroom/toilet on the first floor for childminding purposes. There is a secure garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years; of these not more than three may be under five years, and of these, not more than one may be under one year at any one time. When working with an assistant may care for no more than nine children under eight years; of these not more than six may be under five years, and of these, not more than two may be under one year at any one time. There are currently 23 children on roll, one of whom is in receipt of funded education.

The childminder walks/drives to local schools and pre schools to take and collect children.

The family have a pet guinea pig, rabbit and a cat. The childminder is member of the NCMA Childminder network and is an Accredited Childminder.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from becoming ill because the childminder takes measures to limit the spread of infection and disease in the setting. For example, babies' toys are kept clean by washing with a proprietary cleaner. Surfaces and changing mats are constantly wiped and nappies are disposed of hygienically. Children are learning the importance of personal hygiene through discussion with the childminder about what they are doing and why. The aim is for autonomy for the children. For example, the two-year-old still needs a little help while the four-year-old manages personal hygiene with confidence. Written consent is in place for emergency treatment and first aid and there are detailed procedures for administration of medication. Sick children are not accepted in the provision. Parents receive documentation about this among the policy pack. Children's physical development is promoted very well in the setting. Children and babies engage in energetic and robust play each day. They have sufficient space to move freely in the home or garden. Children have resources such as slides, a tunnel, wheeled toys, robust games, dancing and action rhymes, babies use activity gym and centres to encourage random arm movement and kick their legs. There is a 'procession' where children use a variety of instruments from India to parade through the house with bells to shake on their ankles, percussion and Indian Bells to play in their hands as they process with the childminder through the house. The childminder arranges outside visits to exciting venues where they use specialised robust play equipment. Babies are included in all activities which are adapted accordingly to their levels of ability.

Children learn about healthy eating. In consultation with parents the childminder actively promotes healthy eating. The table is cleared and wiped and the children have their own place mats. Children bring snacks and sometimes complete meals with their favourite drinks from home. Children are enjoying grapes and rice cakes together with their drink at snack time. Water is available throughout the day. Later at lunch time, one child has a mild curry and another a sandwich. Fruits, dairy products, breadsticks, baby food and all prepared meals are safely stored and presented to the children. Through discussion at mealtimes, children are learning about healthy options and how important the right foods are to maintain healthy bodies. Meals are taken family style unless on a picnic. This is a pleasant happy and social occasion. A gentle nursery rhyme audio tape plays and there is much interaction between the children and the childminder as they discuss what they have been doing or where they have been. Good manners are demonstrated by example, dietary needs are recorded and addressed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are welcomed into a visually stimulating and comfortable setting. They see evidence of their art and craft work, photographs and newspaper cuttings in the areas where they play and learn. This gives them a real sense of belonging. Posters, number friezes and pictures throughout the setting all add to the welcome and visual impact for them. The childminder knows the children very well. Although children may self select from a vast range of resources or there is a planned outing or activity, their favourite activities are often readily available for them on arrival to help them to settle. Children use the entire ground floor. They have sufficient space to play freely throughout the rooms, moving with their chosen activity and sometimes extending it through the conservatory to the secure rear garden. The front lounge is allocated for quiet uninterrupted pursuits, rest or sleep. The front door is secure and parents knock to gain entry. Resources are abundant, well maintained and of high quality. Children have all the facilities they need to be comfortable in the setting. There are tables and chairs, high chairs and booster seats with restraints for activities and meals. Children have comfortable sofas and chairs to relax or sleep on plus a travel cot. Resources are plentiful and of very good quality and play value. They are well maintained and meet the needs of the children across the age range. Children are well supervised in a setting where they use safe resources. The childminder has carefully risk assessed her provision to minimise potential accidents both in the setting and on outings. For example, strategic measures are in place in the event of fire and emergency evacuation. Children who wish to play with small items which a baby could swallow use a separate play room. There are no trailing wires, harmful substances are inaccessible and areas are gated to prohibit access such as the stairs and kitchen. Buggies, high chairs and booster seats all have safety restraints and children know the safety rules when on outings. "Find a safe place to cross, hold hands, stop, look and listen, then cross when the green man shows" a child reiterated. Children know that others must wear reins and all children are learning to stay safe. Babies watch and listen to the childminder and the children throughout the day and they too are learning why safety measures are taken. Children are never released to unauthorised persons. In the event of an emergency the childminder contacts the parents or carers to ascertain whether she may release the child.

Children are protected from abuse because the childminder has a good working knowledge of possible signs and symptoms. She understands her duty as a professional child carer to safeguard the children in her care. She knows all the correct procedures and protocols and parents are made aware in writing about her duty to safeguard. An accident book is kept which parents countersign although this is notated in linear style which does not afford confidentiality. Pre-existing injuries are discussed and an incident book is kept.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are relaxed and comfortable in the setting. They show high levels of confidence and self esteem. They make their needs known and take responsibility for themselves as they move toward independence. It is evident children thoroughly enjoying their sessions with the childminder. They are eager to engage in the innovative activities prepared for them. They

display high levels of involvement, clearly excited by the wealth of excellent and well chosen resources. The childminder handles the children with great care and respect, showing genuine affection for them. Children experiment with an extensive range of apparatus and materials which are of excellent quality and play value. The childminder ensures that each child's personal preferences and differing abilities are catered for. She is highly skilled at adapting resources and activities to engage all children's interest. Children may self-select from equipment such as jigsaws, programmable toys, construction, small world play, innovative art and craft materials and techniques, a selection of books, imaginative play items and turn taking games. These are to name but a few in the wealth of resources available in the setting. Outside visits are very popular and include visits to the park, local places of interest and areas outstanding natural beauty. They visit venues where they engage in robust play using supervised specialised equipment, outings to the beach and picnics with childminding colleagues and their children. Children also enjoy play in the garden where they use a variety of suitable equipment and often enjoy picnics there too.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children's independence is actively encouraged in the setting. They are managing their own personal hygiene and are confident to make their needs known, for example, being too hot or too cold and asking for the toilet. They take responsibility for themselves and select the toys and apparatus of their choice. Children are learning about their bodies and wellbeing. They discuss healthy eating options and are learning that exercise and personal hygiene contribute toward being healthy children.

The childminder uses her time very well. She has a clear vision of what she wants to provide for the children in her care. She is meticulous about the planning and organisation within her setting and of visits to outside venues. She is eager to present innovative activities and ensures all materials and resources are in place prior to presentation. Children use a wide range of tools and materials increasing their dexterity and manipulative skills with growing confidence. Children experiment with feathers, sequins, tissue, pencils, paint, handprints and different textures. The children mix paint, the colour of their choice to paint their paper starfish. To make it 'lumpy bumpy' just like the starfish actually feels, children are mixing sand with the paint before applying it to the fish. Conversation about texture and colour and how the paint feels contributes toward extending the children's vocabulary. They enjoy the feel of this mixture and after completing their starfish opt to continue to paint their hands with great absorption later pressing their hand prints on to paper.

Children are developing their spatial awareness. They use the space in the setting confidently, taking care on the slide and considering each others' movements. The childminder bathes the children in language. Opportunities are not missed to extend children's vocabulary, educational development, numeric skills and sense of wonder. Children are presented with stimulating resources such as the light box. The room is made dark which they find very exciting. The light box is switched on and the children experiment with feathers and coloured transparent counters and shapes. They place the feathers on the light box counting and naming colours as they go. One child is designing a bird; the other is happy to look at the light through the feathers. Later they place coloured transparent shapes and counters on top of the light box with the childminder reinforcing the language for mathematics and extending their vocabulary during their play.

Children are experimenting with making patterns. A child lifts the curtains to make a patch of light. There is great pleasure at looking through the shape with natural light and delight at looking at every day objects seen as a different colour through the transparent shapes as the child examines everything in the room. Children are learning the language for mathematics. A child explains she is four years old and that another child in the setting that day is two years old. The childminder picks up the conversation and asks the four-year-old child what age the two-year-old will be at the next birthday and the child answers "three." Children are learning that three is more than two. A child counts circles in books. She uses number beads to measure the height of cars in a book, carefully manipulating the square beads on the lace and holding them steadily against the picture in the book as she focuses and calculates. Number friezes reinforce numerals and children are beginning to make predictions such as there are too many to fit in the container, this is deduced when transparent shapes for use with the light box are collected ready to clear away.

Children move to play in the garden enjoying the slide and looking at the guinea pigs which they help care for. A four-year-old child picks two dandelion clocks handing one to another child attending, children enjoy just blowing the seeds away. The childminder is exceptionally skilled at getting a balance between extending children's education and knowing when to allow children just to enjoy the moment. On outside visits the childminder's open ended questioning encourages children to extend their knowledge of the wider world They chatter and discuss the people they see, animals and their habitat and compare and contrast similarities and differences whether it be homes, transport, animals or people.

Musical instruments from India, audio tapes, visits to the library and a range of stories and books extend children's language and literacy skills. There is much discussion about butterflies which led to bumblebees and their work in the garden collecting pollen. A child knows that honey comes from bees and the children engage with the childminder as they absorb more knowledge about the wider world and add new words to their vocabulary. They enjoy making buzzing sounds as they imagine they are bees. Children are learning that words carry meaning. Mark making materials are available throughout the day and adjacent to imaginative play situations. All art and craft work is labelled by the childminder in both upper and lower case writing and some labels are in joined letters, sometimes inviting children to count. "How many small, medium, big, sparkly fish can you see?". Children recognise their names in different kinds of print and writing. Newspaper cuttings of events they have been to or been involved in are displayed on the walls together with photographs which further endorses the value of writing, letters and consolidating that words carry meaning.

Children respond to adults' interest. They move and explore new experiences with growing confidence, they are involved, eager to learn, happy, secure and settled. Children are progressing well toward achieving the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning in the setting is outstanding because all areas of learning are covered and there are no weaknesses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children value diversity, for example, they are beginning to learn about the wider world through discussion and the resources they use such as small world play items, 'Happy Street' people,

woks and Chinese bowls among the home corner equipment, posters and discussion about people and things they see when out and about. The childminder is also very aware of changing family structure and considers this when making cards for special occasion family days.

Inclusion is a strength, the childminder supports children who have impairment, adapts equipment/resources to promote inclusion and works closely with the children's parents and other professionals to maximise children's potential and development.

Children are considerate. They take turns and understand the rules of the setting. They know how to behave on outside visits with regard to being safe, courteous and well mannered. At home a child collects her own shoes to go in the garden but picks up a younger child's shoes also, no adult requested or prompted this action. Children share resources and play well together and have helped to raise funds for Barnardos. Spiritual moral social and cultural welfare is fostered in the setting. Younger children are learning the rules by watching and listening to the childminder and the older children as in crossing the roads, learning the house rules and learning good manners at meal times. Praise is awarded for good behaviour, achievement, helpfulness and kindness to one another. The childminder has an excellent awareness of the children's differing levels of behaviour and understanding. Clear boundaries and strategies are imposed and policies are upheld in practice.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children's needs are met through the partnership with parents which the childminder highly values. She aims for a professional approach with parents which is tempered by friendship. She consults with parents about the effectiveness of her provision, is open to and acts upon information and new ideas. Each child has a tracking sheet noting aspects of learning. These are revisited and reinforced to consolidate new learning. Alongside this monitoring for each child, parents receive a dated record of children's achievements and activities showing how they are progressing. Policies are shared, consents discussed and acquired and contracts are carefully negotiated to ensure a suitable care package is arranged to meet each child's individual needs. If an issue needs to be discussed in private the childminder telephones the parent or seeks to speak with them away from other service users and children in respect of confidentiality. Parents have opportunities to be involved in their child's learning, extending this at home. The childminder has a comprehensive complaints procedure in place which is fully in accordance with the new regulatory framework. She knows how to progress complaints within the time scale and makes parents aware of the regulators contact details in the unlikely event of issues remaining unresolved.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are very well cared for because the childminder is suitably qualified and experienced to do so. She has a wealth of experience, holds many qualifications and has attended many useful workshops which extend her own education and enhance the provision she offers to service users. First aid is up to date and she ensures her assistant is suitable to work with children. She has undertaken required vetting procedures and protects children from unvetted people by vigilant supervision.

Children are very well supported because the childminder ensures ratios are maintained and children receive optimum quality care. On specific days where extra children attend she employs her mother as an assistant to maintain ratios and ensure quality care for the children. Her registers are up to date and notate actual times of arrival and departure. Supervision is vigilant at all times.

The childminder consults with the network coordinator and in her absence, with early years advisors, the childminder support network, other peer mentors and accredited childminders. She evaluates and reviews her curriculum using these colleagues and support networks. She identifies areas to improve and is always seeking to enhance her provision.

She arranges sponsored toddles such as the Barnados fundraising. She has arranged consultation with Environmental Health Officers to ensure food safety within her setting. She organises trips to outside venues such as 'Jungle Jims' and 'Jolly Rogers' where children meet other children and adults and use specialised equipment under her supervision and that of trained staff. The childminder has organised membership to the library and to the toy library, she is also a member of the early years resource centre and library. The light box borrowed from the early years resource centre is an example of how she seeks to obtain innovative and stimulating activities for the children in her care. She has clear written plans of daily activities and outings which are flexible. These are colour coded to ensure all areas of learning are covered. All documentation is in place. The childminder uses records effectively to ensure children's individual needs are met. Most information is filed securely and in respect of confidentiality. All records can be easily accessed and are readily available for inspection at any time. Information is shared with parents, regularly updated and reviewed.

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 continue to maintain levels of hygiene in the sandpit. Children are not at risk because the childminder keeps a secure lid on the sandpit and maintains good hygiene levels throughout her entire practice in order to limit the spread of infection and disease.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted to report 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 may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- maintain confidentiality in the recording of accidents.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education 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