



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	155401
Inspection date	18 December 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Musgrove

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 2000. She lives with her husband and family in Worthing, West Sussex. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently co-childminding with her husband who is a registered childminder. When they work together they can jointly care for a maximum of seven children at a time. They are currently minding 17 children on a part-time basis. The registration includes overnight care for two children under eight years.

The whole of the ground floor and part of the first floor of the property are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The family has three pet cats, a dog, a gecko and some fish.

The childminder takes children to many local amenities including parks, the beach and toddler groups.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is involved in the running of the local care and toddler group for minded children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely clean environment, where hygiene has a high priority. The childminder is trained in basic food hygiene. This ensures that children's meals and snacks are prepared in accordance with good food hygiene practice. Her excellent support and guidance helps children to gain a good understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become independent in their own personal care. For example, children are beginning to understand why certain routines are important. They automatically wash and dry their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating food. The childminder promotes a healthy life style and encourages children to think about their own needs. These include thinking about when they need a sleep, or a tissue to wipe their nose.

The childminder is trained in first aid and has a current certificate. This means she can administer first aid in the event of an accident. There are clear written guidelines for parents, detailing when to keep children at home. This ensures that unwanted contagious diseases are not spread. All mandatory records relating to medicine administration and accidents are maintained to an excellent standard.

The childminder really promotes healthy eating for the children. She encourages them to eat plenty of fresh fruit. In the summer months they visit a local farm to pick their own. Children enjoy a healthy snack in the morning. They choose their fruit from a range that includes grapes, bananas and satsumas. The childminder and after school children plan a four week menu for the freshly cooked dinners. This includes their favourite dishes, for example, roast chicken with vegetables, jacket potatoes or toad in the hole. Desserts are fromage frais or fresh fruit. The childminder promotes the drinking of fresh water and children can ask for a drink at any time. On occasions, older children help the childminder to prepare dinner, for example, they create their own pizzas.

Children enjoy an extensive range of stimulating physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. In the summer months they develop their co-ordination and control on the trampoline in the childminder's garden. They regularly visit a soft play centre and enjoy the ball pit, soft climbing equipment and bouncy castle. The childminder is very aware of 'Birth to three matters' and many of the children's activities are planned from this guidance. Children enjoy plenty of fresh air and visit the local beach area for a good run around and to let off steam.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming and child-friendly environment. They thoroughly enjoy an extensive range of high quality toys and suitable equipment. These are in excellent condition, well maintained and cleaned regularly. All areas within the house are

exceptionally well-organised. This means that toddlers and young children move around safely, freely and independently. They confidently and enthusiastically choose their preferred toys and make decisions about how they would like to spend their time at the childminder's home.

The childminder has an excellent understanding and awareness of all safety issues. This means that children are very well protected from harm and cared for in a safe and secure environment. The childminder uses extremely detailed risk assessments for daily and six monthly checks. Each day she checks all areas before the children arrive. For example, in the kitchen area she checks that the back door is locked and that the first aid box is accessible. Twice a year the childminder assesses the whole house in order to identify potential risks. She then takes action to limit or eradicate the risk, for example, she services and maintains the smoke alarm that is near to the ground floor fire. The childminder has implemented a number of safety measures to protect children in her home. These include socket covers and the safe storage of sharp knives and kitchen cleaners. She teaches children to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, when they use scissors. The childminder has clear fire procedures displayed on the wall, a plan of exit routes, linked smoke alarms and a fire blanket. Monthly fire drills are well-documented and mean that children know how to evacuate the house and keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of keeping children safe on outings and on daily trips to local schools. She talks to them about road safety and they know about the green man and that it is important to stop, look and listen. This means that children are beginning to know how to keep themselves safe. The childminder communicates with parents about the importance of using the correct car seat. This means that children are kept safe while in her vehicle.

Children are extremely well protected because the childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in child protection through recent training. She is confident and would recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse. She has the current procedures to follow and knows the action to take if she has concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time in the setting. They are cared for by a childminder who takes time to build close relationships with individuals. This means that children arrive happily, settle quickly and are thoroughly absorbed in worthwhile activities throughout the day.

The childminder has an excellent working knowledge of 'Birth to three matters'. This means the children take part in activities that are really relevant to their individual stage of development. Regular observations are noted on individual child records and shared with the parents. For example, the childminder records when a baby begins to express different emotions or responds positively to touch.

Children are animated as they choose from an exceptional range of good quality learning resources. These coupled with the childminder's skilful interaction and adept use of language mean that children have quality learning experiences. For example, the childminder extends a

child's learning through good use of appropriate size language when a toy does not fit because it is too tall.

Children take part in an extensive range of exciting craft activities. These include making their own Christmas crackers and a variety of decorations. This means they develop small motor skills, such as cutting, picking up small pieces and sticking. During a visit to Shoots Garden Centre they paint their own pieces of pottery. Children have many exciting and stimulating opportunities to learn about the world around them. During a theme on mini-beasts they visit Cissbury Ring and collect a variety of mini-beasts and enjoy a scavenger hunt and picnic.

Babies and younger children enjoy a stimulating range of sensory tactile experiences. These include playing with different textures and investigating the sounds and colours of the baby gym. Younger babies enjoy the cosy feeling of the soft play mat and toys all around them.

Overall, children show high levels of independence, curiosity and concentration while at the childminder's home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder has a real love of children. She is very aware of individual differences and treats each child as a special person. She welcomes and works closely with their families and recognises the uniqueness of each child. The childminder has a good understanding of equality of opportunity and promotes this within her childminding. For example, she is very astute about a young child's communication needs and adapts activities accordingly. The childminder and children enjoy playing a game of disability dominoes. This helps children to talk, discuss and notice that not everybody is the same. Children learn about other cultures through playing with a range of appropriate resources. These include dressing up clothes and dolls and puppets from other cultures. During Chinese New Year children enjoy a range of art and craft activities, such as making concertina dragons. They celebrate the Indian festival of Diwali at the local toddler group. Children have a wealth of links with the local community. These include visiting Shoreham airport as part of their transport topic and doing a sponsored scoot around the block to raise money for Children in Need.

The childminder has a good understanding and some experience of caring for children with specific needs. She has an excellent knowledge of modifying resources and adapting her home to ensure that needs are met. For example, the childminder's house has been modified and adapted. It now includes a ramp and a downstairs toilet. This means the childminder can care for a child with physical disabilities.

Children behave exceptionally well at the childminder's home. She works alongside her co-childminder and together they provide a considered and consistent approach to behaviour management. She uses appropriate strategies with the children. For example, she tries to quickly resolve an issue and encourages children to share a toy that has caused a squabble. If necessary she uses time out with an adult, in order for the children to sit and reflect. The childminder gives good clear reasons to the children so they understand why some behaviour is not desirable. For example, she explains that if you stand on a box, it might break.

The childminder has a real talent for producing interesting and informative parental information. This helps to foster an excellent partnership with parents and significantly contributes to the children's well-being. The childminder produces a regular newsletter which includes details and updates of significant events. Parents who are interested in using her service are given a detailed prospectus. Daily communication with parents is through an attractive written and pictorial diary. This gives information of activities that children have done, sleep patterns, food intake and how their child has been during the day, for example, happy, unwell or grumpy. This means parents are well informed about their child's care. At the end of each year children take home a beautiful year book. This unique record includes photos and detailed accounts of achievements and interesting moments during the past year. This is a permanent record for parents to treasure.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the exceptional quality of organisation. The childminder is very dedicated and committed to improvement and she keeps up to date with current childcare practice. She has attended a wealth of relevant courses and is currently studying for a degree in Early Childhood Studies. This means that children are cared for by a childminder with relevant training and a very good understanding of the needs of young children.

Her home is effectively organised, with well laid out and spacious areas to maximise the play opportunities for the children. This means they are able to move around freely and independently. Although there is plenty of adult attention, children have many opportunities to make their own decisions and initiate their own play and learning.

The childminder has all mandatory documentation in place. This is very well maintained and securely stored. She has many well written, informative policies and procedures, for example working in partnership with parents and equal opportunities. These enhance and support her service and the care that she gives to the children.

Parents know about their child's day because of the wide range and high quality of information that they receive. This significantly contributes to the continuity and quality of the children's care.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 outstanding. 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

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