

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY270268
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Greg Wolff
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and one in Chafford Hundred, Essex. The whole 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 four children under eight at any one time and is currently minding four children under eight part-time. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school. The childminder attends the local parent/toddler group. The family have two dogs, a cat and a parrot.

She is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for early education for three and four-year-olds. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming home where they learn the importance of excellent levels of hygiene and personal care. Exemplary practices are strongly encouraged. The childminder helps children to gain a complete understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children are encouraged to talk about how best to make sure that their hands are cleaned. Exceptional vigilance by the childminder ensures that there are frequent opportunities to extend discussion as to the reason why hand washing is important. Children have a clear understanding of why they must wash their hands after using the toilet, when returning from outside play and prior to eating. This substantially reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Children actively learn to protect themselves against the harmful effects of germs as they use antibacterial solutions to cleanse and eradicate dirt from their hands and individual hand towels to dry their wet hands.

The childminder works to detailed, purposeful policies and procedures which she has devised in relation to health, hygiene, medication and illness. Extremely sound procedures are in place for children who are unwell to safeguard the good health of other children who attend the provision. The childminder uses her knowledge of nursing to ensure that children always receive the best care. The childminder rigorously maintains an accident book in accordance with registration requirements. Children receive appropriate first aid because the childminder maintains her first aid skills through regular training and actively monitors her provision of medical supplies.

Children are positively encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle because the childminder provides healthy snacks and meals and promotes children's knowledge and understanding of nutritional issues through discussion, activities and reading. She always ensures that fresh fruit and vegetables are available for children. Children develop an increased awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet as they enjoy home cooked food from fresh ingredients. The childminder meets specific dietary needs within the varied menu available to the children and respects parental wishes and preferences. Children have regular opportunities to help create a menu that they will enjoy eating. The children always sit at the table to eat, learn good manners and social rules, and respond to one another with outstanding courtesy and care. Children are positively encouraged to drink water which is freely and constantly available from dedicated cups.

Children enjoy an extensive range of stimulating activities that positively contribute to their good health. The childminder has a robust understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, reflected in the exceptional and regular opportunities to enhance the development of young children's large muscle movements. The childminder has a thorough understanding of appropriate types of activities and levels of support for each child. This promotes children's confidence to try out new skills, set their own limits and recognise when to ask for help. All year round there is a daily opportunity to play in the child-orientated garden. This is equipped with a vast array of toys, games and play equipment which develop children's physical

competences. Children benefit from opportunities to cut, draw and manipulate malleable materials. This supports the development and improvement of children's physical dexterity.

Children rest and are active in accordance to their needs. Older children benefit from an opportunity to relax on arrival home from school whilst younger children sleep in line with home care routines.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very well cared for in an exceptionally welcoming, clean, safe and secure home environment. The childminder uses space in a highly creative manner enabling children access to toys independently and safely. The welcoming notice board provides a source of valuable information for parents and conveys that children's needs are paramount in this setting. For example, photographs with contact details, certificates and procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency assure parents that their children are in safe hands. Children have a clear understanding of the areas to which they have free access, and those which they require the childminder's agreement to access, for example, the kitchen when the oven is on. The childminder is supported in this by the pet parrot, which is often heard to remind the children of house rules.

Children independently select activities from an easily accessible, wide range of stimulating resources, which are in a good state of repair and are age appropriate. The childminder uses detailed planning programmes to identify the potential learning supported by each item of equipment in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage guidance. She carefully monitors and supervises children's choice of toys, to ensure they are appropriate for their age and stage of development and played with in a safe manner.

Children are able to move around and play safely, freely and independently because the childminder has identified and minimised all risks, expertly balancing freedom for children and setting safe limits. Children actively learn to keep themselves safe because the childminder has clear rules and routines in order to maintain their safety inside and outside the home. For example, the childminder talks to the children about the dangers of crossing roads and the appropriate time, routine and place to do it.

The childminder safeguards children's welfare and has all of the required policies and documents in place. The childminder carries comprehensive contact details on her person at all times. Excellent practices actively contribute to the safety of children; these include thorough written risk assessments, extensive and detailed emergency evacuation procedures, frequently practised fire drills and open discussions about road safety when out on walks. Children are very safe with the childminder as she has a robust knowledge and understanding of child protection in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle into the environment exceptionally well and are happy, confident and eager to learn. They are involved in a stimulating range of activities which are interesting, fun and develop their curiosity, creativity and imagination.

All areas of children's development is significantly enhanced by the exceptional quality of the childminder's interactions. Children are listened to and their communication skills are well promoted as the childminder positively responds to their gestures, sounds and questions. She has a very good understanding of how children learn and uses 'Birth to three matters' to meet young children's individual needs. Activities are adapted to ensure that all children can participate. Children are totally absorbed and interested in everything they do and are confident to try new experiences. Children are inquisitive and eager to learn and listen intently as the childminder talks about what they are doing.

Children's curiosity is heightened as they work with the different coloured and textured items provided for collage on paper plates. Children are involved in a wide range of purposeful outdoor play activities that provide high levels of challenge, many based around the current theme.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress because the childminder plans an exciting range of activities both inside and outside the home which are stimulating and fun. Curriculum planning ensures that all six areas are very well covered and gives a clear indication of the learning intentions, the way in which activities will be differentiated, the vocabulary to be used, how activities can be extended and any special considerations. All activities are evaluated to determine how they can be improved, if necessary, to inform future plans and enhance all areas of children's learning. Children's communication skills are superb and they are given time to talk individually and listen to each other. Children speak confidently to share their experiences of home, their families and any special news such as birthdays. Discussions play a major part of the children's daily routine and this enhances their language. Their vocabulary is extended due to the exceptionally high quality interactions they have with the childminder and they are asked questions to make them think and consolidate all areas of their learning. The childminder knows the children very well and continually provides children with challenge. She is very perceptive of children's needs and is very aware of the different rates at which children learn. Children are given time to explore and complete activities. She provides help and support where necessary so children's confidence and self-esteem is increased.

Children are eager to learn and approach all areas of their play with great enthusiasm and interest. Children seize opportunities to develop their independence and take great pride in demonstrating what they can do. Children take time to complete their own pictures and revel in the praise they receive in recognition of their achievements. This is further enhanced by the childminder's willingness to display the work they do. Expectations for behaviour are very high and children respond to praise and encouragement from the childminder. They behave very well, taking turns to share.

Children have excellent opportunities for mark making and to develop early writing skills. They write letters as they play, make shopping lists and write their names on their own work. They hold pencils correctly and learn letter formation as they write. Some children are able to do this unaided. Children are able to recognise initial sounds in words and can recognise some upper and lower case letters. Children listen attentively to well known stories, joining in with refrains and know the sequence of events. They have fun making up their own stories deciding whether it should have a happy, sad or funny ending. Older children look at the elements of stories such as the characters, title and author. Children use role play to develop their imagination and language as they use a cardboard box in numerous ways to enhance the play alongside the current theme. Children make very good use of books, turning the pages from right to left and handling them correctly. They know that books can be used for information. Their vocabulary is regularly extended with the introduction of new words and these are reinforced during discussion.

Children's mathematical development is extremely good. They recognise numbers from one to ten and can count forwards and backwards. For example, they count the beans that Jack is given in the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Regular activities are used to develop children's awareness of simple number operations such as counting bricks, sorting cars into groups or counting cups and plates at snack time. They weigh out the required amount of ingredients when cooking. Their understanding of positional language is good as they discuss going over, under, through and around, excitedly relating the language to a familiar story they all know well. They learn to predict what comes next in the sequence.

Numerous opportunities and activities develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Role play opportunities are particularly well planned and they enjoy playing in the shops or on Mars. Topic themes ensure that children learn about themselves, other people and their environment. Children celebrate a variety of different festivals such as Easter and learn about the culture and customs. Children are encouraged to question how things work and why things happen, for example as they plant seeds and watch their 'beanstalks' grow. They observe the seeds and plants as they grow and understand that roots help to feed the plant. They learn how to tend to their garden and ensure that their plants have sufficient water. Children look at fruit from trees and vegetables that grow underground such as onions and potatoes and discuss their texture, smell, appearance and taste. Children see how life evolves and explore animal habitats. For example, they make visits to places outside the home to climb inside trees to gain an owl's eye perspective of the world.

Children's regular use of creative materials enable them to develop a wealth of imaginative, exploratory and sensory experiences. The educational programme effectively covers the areas of music, movement, dance, art and craft and imaginative play. Children are able to explore different materials for themselves using recyclable materials and mixing paint. They have great fun as they make cars on their paper plates. Children use different painting and printing techniques to create their designs such as using fruit to make patterns or various materials to make a collage.

Children move extremely confidently with control and coordination. They negotiate obstacles well and use a range of small and large equipment to great effect. They use balls to improve their catching and throwing skills. Children enjoy moving their bodies in different ways as they

dance and interpret the music such as wriggling like worms and thoroughly enjoy action rhymes. Children use small equipment competently and are adept at using paper clips, hole punchers and staplers.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children hold a strong awareness and understanding of others because the childminder actively provides opportunities for children to mix with individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds on a regular basis. For example, the childminder takes the children to local toddler groups, childminding network groups and activity centres. She actively strives to keep her service accessible to all. She provides an extensive range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and of different faiths. For example, children learn about a number of different Festivals of Light, comparing each and sharing their common themes. Children establish a robust understanding of their local community as they travel to and from toddler groups and other local amenities and join the childminder on frequent trips to places of interest where they can explore aspects of the themes which they are currently using.

All children are highly valued and respected as individuals and are fully included in all activities. Children sit together at the kitchen table to eat meals, enabled by a cushion, booster seat or high chair adaptor as appropriate. Children are highly confident individuals. They have positive levels of self-esteem and respect the opinions and actions of others because the childminder consistently praises their efforts. She reaffirms their achievements, guiding their social and moral values. Children receive excellent support according to their individual needs.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate high levels of understanding about responsible behaviour and know, for instance, to seek permission out of courtesy for specific activities such as use of the play equipment outside. Children show care and concern for each other when playing and play together co-operatively, sharing, taking turns and assisting one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The childminder effectively meets children's needs through the daily routine as discussed with their parents. Parents actively contribute towards their children's learning and development because they remain fully informed of the daily activities at all times. The childminder implements a highly effective induction session followed up with a detailed welcome pack which includes copies of all written policies and procedures. This initiates an exceptional two-way communication process which enables parents to fully participate in their child's development and learning. The childminder ensures that daily discussion about the service provided keeps parents informed about their child's activities and maintains a detailed written diary system for all children in addition to individual profiles of attainment to monitor progression. The childminder positively invites parents to make their own written contributions and they eagerly respond to questionnaires, diary entries and opportunities to share their views on their children's developmental and care needs. Supplementary information is regularly shared in appropriate forms. This ensures parents are aware of activities, events, outings, celebrations of children's birthdays and any other issues such as changes to policies or amendments to practice. For example, parents were notified of the new procedure to report complaints or concerns in line with legislative changes.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from an exceptionally well-organised routine and stimulating programme of activities. Children are very happy, comfortable and settled in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are met. The children spend their time purposefully and all activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities for the children, taking into account each child's individual needs.

Excellent and comprehensively written policies and procedures are in place which are individual to the setting. They address each of the National Standards and have a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. All documentation, which is regularly reviewed and updated, is shared with parents to keep them well informed about the service. Detailed planning for the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework is of the highest quality and ensures that children have a varied curriculum to enrich their learning experiences. The childminder is very aware of her role in delivering a service that enables children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. She ensures that the children have a range of different experiences to cover the six areas of learning. Very informative and detailed daily diaries record children's progress in all areas of their development and these are shared with parents. The childminder's excellent knowledge and practice ensures that all children are able to develop their full potential.

Children benefit from the care of a childminder who is highly motivated and regularly attends training courses. She liaises with other childminders to discuss current childminding issues and provide a support system which, through experience, has been found to work well. In addition, she continually monitors and evaluates her practice, working closely with her network co-ordinator to enhance children's play and learning and completing a full written self-evaluation form.

Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At her last inspection, the childminder agreed to obtain written parental consent for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment as required. The childminder has ensured that all required consents have been obtained and that these are checked and updated regularly. In this way, children's health and safety are assured at all times.

## **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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### 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.

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