

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	155499
Inspection date	20 April 2007
Inspector	Kerry Iden
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 2001. She lives with her husband and their two school aged children in a house in Wick, Littlehampton, West Sussex. The whole of the 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 three children under five, many on a flexible basis and an additional child in the holidays.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is completed her training to become an accredited childminder and attends training on a regular basis to update her skills. The childminder provides a non-smoking environment and there are currently a dog, cat, a guinea pig and a cockatiel on the property.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean home where they learn the importance of excellent hygiene and personal care through daily routines as they are encouraged to wash hands at appropriate times. They have an excellent role model to follow as they watch the childminder wash her hands after routine activities such as wiping noses, changing nappies and petting the dog. The childminder ensures good hygienic practices within her home such as using an antibacterial spray on low chairs after activities and before meal times and maintaining a strict cleaning routine. Children's health is continued through the clear procedures around nappy changing and children enjoy the role play of putting on disposable gloves themselves as they change their 'babies'.

The childminder's first aid training is updated every three years enabling her to help maintain children's health. Children will receive consistency in their care as the childminder follows detailed instructions from the parents about the correct administering procedures of medication. Robust systems are in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication, all of which is signed by parents. Detailed, written policies around medication, sickness and illness, accidents, emergency medical treatment and safety in relation to the household pets are shared with parents, outlining the effective hygiene practices used by the childminder to promote children's health.

The childminder works incredibly closely with the individual needs of the children and the preferences of the parents around meal and snack times for the children. If children arrive early or haven't done so well with breakfast the childminder re-organises her routine to ensure snack time is earlier and substantial enough to keep children going until lunchtime. A well balanced menu is available for the parents to see the sort of meals the childminder can provide throughout the day. Alternatively they can provide their own meals which the childminder stores and serves accordingly. The individual needs of very young children and babies are considered as the childminder works very closely with parents around milk feeds and weaning arrangements.

Children engage in many physical activities both within the home, in the garden and away from the setting, for example, playing in the garden with bats and balls, ride on toys, small slide, sand and water play. Art activities in the garden such as patio painting are always one of the children's favourites. They also get involved in some gardening activities such as planting French beans, carrots and a selection of seeds. The children have regular time away from the setting as they visit near by parks, go for walks and go on outings to the beach, farm and zoos.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children have excellent space to play and relax within an environment that is welcoming to them and their parents. The childminder makes good use of the space available, allowing for different types of play to go on in different areas of the home. For example, the use of the sectioned off area of the kitchen for messy activities and play dough. The childminder has made the ground floor of her property a dedicated space to the minded children whilst she is working. Their beautiful works of art, childminder's certificates, posters and parental information is displayed on the walls for the parents to see. the childminder has also displayed many labels around the room to help children as they begin to recognise letters and the formation of letters.

Children are able to access a selection of play items themselves whilst others are kept in storage and rotated by the childminder. The children lead the day and the activities they want to do. The childminder has a plan for the day and week but this is flexible as children often want to spend longer or shorter amounts of time at each activity. For example, during the inspection the enjoyment and concentration levels of the child attending were so high the continuation of the play dough activity lasted far longer than the childminder planned. The childminder ensures that all toys and equipment are stimulating, fun and interesting whilst maintaining safety as she replaces, cleans and rotates the equipment to keep the children safe and stimulated.

Children play in a secure environment where they can move around safely and where high priority is given to their personal safety. The childminder has devised and carries out an evacuation procedure with the children, this is initially learnt through role play situations and then practised with the fire alarm. Other procedures the childminder has devised herself are in place to protect the children such as risk assessments and equipment inspection records. Children learn the importance of keeping themselves safe, especially when out walking because the childminder discusses this with the children, has firm rules about their safety and offers them age appropriate boundaries.

Children are very well protected by the childminder who has a clear and robust understanding in all aspects of child protection. Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare, these are shared with the parents.

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 develops their curiosity, creativity and imagination. 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.

All areas of children's development is significantly enhanced by the exceptional quality of the childminder's interaction. Children are listened to and their communication skills are well promoted as the childminder positively responds to their gestures and questions. She has a very good understanding of how children learn, she instinctively knows when to support them in their play and when to stand back. Children are beginning to learn to use their imagination well, try out new things and are effectively challenged in their learning. They are growing in confidence because the childminder gives them time and encouragement to develop new skills. For example, a simple play dough activity became a great source for conversation and success for the child as their concentration was held for an extended time and they learnt new skills.

The childminder designs loose plans for the children, these are very much on a flexible basis as the childminder places high importance on a child led setting. Plans are often based around a topic, for example as they are currently talking about the story of the ugly duckling where the childminder tells the story, the children can act out a story and many other activities are linked to the story. Story sacks are used which sometimes go home with the children to continue their enjoyment of the story. The walls of the lounge are then decorated with the children's topic related art work which they show off to their parents upon collection.

All children benefit from the childminder's expert knowledge around the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework. Although the childminder currently isn't caring for any

children of the Foundation Stage age she maintains high quality observations on all the children. She has designed child centred learning plans for the children where she completes an assessment of the activity and identifies the next steps for children's individual learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The childminder actively promotes equality of opportunity and takes into account children's individual needs, she takes her time and works with the parents to gain an understanding of the child's individual needs when they start in the setting. Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where their individual needs and lifestyles are respected. There are opportunities through activities and resources for children to develop a sense of belonging and to begin to understand about the world around them. Resources are accessed for the children to become introduced to other ways of life and together with other childminder's they have made displays of ethnic clothing, jewellery and African musical instruments.

The childminder is aware that some children may have special needs and works closely with parents to provide any special services required and makes adaptations to activities to ensure all children feel included. The childminder is dedicated to what she does and if attending specific training opportunities to help her have a better understanding of a particular special need then she resources the appropriate courses.

Children are extremely happy and well behaved. The childminder uses positive strategies to manage children's behaviour which are appropriate to each child's age and level of understanding. She has incorporated a behaviour management statement and some simple house rules into the information she provides for parents, ensuring they are fully aware of the strategies, thereby encouraging consistency. Children are spoken to in a polite, positive manner and thrive on the praise and encouragement they receive.

Children benefit from the strong and effective partnerships that have developed between the childminder and parents. Parents are provided with a wealth of information on the effective care practices used, daily routine, activities and future events, enabling them to keep up to date with their child's care and experiences and feel included in the daily events of the setting. Photographic displays and children's individual play and learning plans show children enjoying a range of activities and experiences. The childminder has designed a parental notice board of relevant information for the parents and ensures a thorough exchange of verbal information on a daily basis.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children enter into an exceptionally well planned and prepared home because the childminder has given great thought to activities she plans to carry out with each child before they arrive, whilst at the same time allowing for times through the day for quiet or rest periods. Planning records are completed by the childminder which she links to the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework and the use of observations and assessments allow her to identify children's development needs.

To ensure children's needs are superbly met the childminder keeps up to date with current trends by attending any training or work shops that she feels are relevant. She is highly motivated to learn and develop to enhance all areas of the childminding service she offers. She

is also involved in the local childminding network with which she became accredited, she regularly has visits from the local network co-ordinator who supports her in supporting other childminder's in the area.

Very clear, comprehensive documentation is in place to inform parents about her service. All records are up-to-date and readily available. The childminder uses her own written policies and procedures to guide her in her daily practices. The childminder is very aware of the need to maintain all information she receives, both verbally and in writing, in the strictest confidence. The high quality of the provision means that 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 ensure incidents and existing injuries are recorded. The childminder ensures she records all incidents and existing injuries within her accident recording which is stored confidentially.

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 the 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

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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