

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY287165
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Fler Wright
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 good. 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 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and nine years in the Woodingdean area of Brighton, East Sussex. The majority of the property is used for childminding and there is a secure garden available for outside play. The family have three pet cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, and able to offer overnight care to one child. There are currently six children on roll, all of whom attend on a part time basis. The childminder takes children on regular outings to the local park, shops and toddler groups.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Well established hygiene routines enable children to learn about the importance of keeping healthy. The childminder ensures children have access to a clean and hygienic environment, and takes effective precautions during nappy changes to promote good hygiene practice. The childminder discusses children's individual needs with parents early on, to ensure all dietary preferences and allergies are known. She has a first aid certificate in place, and all accidents are recorded helping to safeguard the children in her care. The childminder's emergency policy includes information on the steps she would take in a medical emergency, such as call for an ambulance, so that parents are clear about the procedures she would follow should this situation ever occur. However, not all parents have been asked to sign a consent authorising the childminder to act in their child's best interests in the event of an emergency. Medication records are thorough, and cover all short and long term medication that the childminder administers.

Children learn about germs and the reasons why they need to wash their hands. They brush their teeth after meals helping them to learn about how to keep themselves healthy. Children use individual beakers, dummies and flannels helping to greatly reduce the risk of cross contamination.

The childminder prepares for meals for children, but is also happy for parents to supply food if required. She offers children a range of healthy snacks and drinks that appeal to them and meet their dietary needs. Children have free access to their beakers helping to ensure they remain sufficiently hydrated.

Children have a good relationship with the childminder, who is responsive to their emotional needs. They enjoy a range of activities that help to develop their physical skills on a daily basis. They visit toddler groups during the week and make use of the childminder's large garden, helping to ensure their physical development is appropriately encouraged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have access to a warm and welcoming play area with enough space for them to explore and move around freely. There are a good range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources suitable for the ages of the minded children. The range includes books, soft toys, role play, creative equipment and musical toys. Children are able to access the resources easily, encouraging their independence and freedom of choice.

The childminder has a very good understanding of safety issues and potential hazards and has successfully minimised these around the home. This helps to ensure children are kept safe and free from harm. There are clear procedures in place for outings, and the childminder organises these well. She has smoke alarms on each level of the property and has devised a fire evacuation plan helping to safeguard children. She also has a fire blanket in the kitchen next to the cooker, although it is not wall mounted making it harder to access in an emergency.

The childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and knows what action to take should she have concerns about a child in her care. This ensures she is able

to act in the children's best interests in the event of a referral being made. She records all existing injuries helping to further safeguard the children in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed, and are confident in the home environment. They relate well to the childminder who is warm and affectionate making them feel comfortable and valued. Children profit from regular outings to toddler groups where they are able to develop their social, intellectual and physical skills.

Children have easy access to a good range of age appropriate toys that provide both balance and challenge. The way that the childminder organises the space and resources helps children to take initiative and develop increasing confidence and independence. Children enjoy playing with the equipment available in the home environment and activities such as painting, role play, singing and music help the young children in attendance to enjoy and achieve well. The childminder plans activities weekly in advance, helping to ensure children have access to a varied and stimulating range of experiences. She is very receptive and is passionate about her job and the children she cares for. She has an excellent understanding of child development, and enjoys assessing children's progress and planning activities to help develop their skills further. She shares all of this information with parents, helping to ensure children make very good progress in all areas of development.

The childminder is relaxed and confident in her abilities to care for children, which helps to ensure she is able to manage the children effectively and their individual needs are met. Children benefit from frequent interaction with the childminder who offers support when required.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with respect and are made to feel good about themselves. The childminder encourages all children to participate in the activities provided, to ensure they each have an equal opportunity to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Children have access to a range of resources and activities that promote equality and diversity. The childminder has cared for children with English as an additional language, and is able to meet children's needs effectively.

The childminder has no experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although she has a good understanding and a very receptive attitude towards the topic. She is aware of the support available to her and the benefits of working closely with parents and outside agencies in order to ensure children's individual needs are met.

The childminder is very calm and relaxed and offers effective explanations to children when managing their behaviour, which helps them to learn right from wrong and play together harmoniously. She offers regular praise and encouragement to children to help increase their confidence and self-esteem.

Parents are very happy with the care provided. The childminder encourages an exceptionally good partnership with parents, and does all she can to ensure a communicative relationship is in place and children's continual care and developmental needs are met. She asks parents to complete annual questionnaires so that she can get some feedback and look at ways of improving her practice. Parents provide a wealth of relevant information about their children to the

childminder, including completing 'all about me' forms, helping to ensure they each receive individual care and attention. Daily exchanges of information about what the children have done, what they have eaten and the general care given to them during the day helps to ensure parents are kept fully informed. The childminder also completes journals for each of the younger children in attendance and these detail everything children do during the day. The childminder includes photographs, children's work and developmental records as well as weekly activity plans to ensure parents know exactly what their children have been doing, and what the childminder is doing with them next. These make a lovely record of the way in which the children are progressing, and it is obvious that the childminder enjoys completing these and is passionate about her role.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. She is very well organised and has an extensive range of policies and procedures in place that help to promote the safety and welfare of the children in attendance. All of the policies are available on her website for parents to view, although she also goes through them all with parents in hard copy format to ensure they are well aware of the way she runs her childminding business. All of the required documentation is in place, as are the vast majority of written parental consents.

The childminder has a very good understanding of her childminding role and responsibilities. She is very receptive, and is eager to improve her practice. She has attended all of the required training and has booked herself onto further briefing sessions to help ensure she keeps up to date with current childcare practice. Children benefit from a well-organised environment where they receive good adult support to help them feel secure and confident.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to complete the attendance register promptly, and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The register is now completed throughout the day as children arrive and depart helping to ensure it is an accurate reflection of who is on the premises at any time. The childminder has sought written permission from parents to allow her to administer short term emergency medication to children, helping to safeguard them in an emergency situation. This was her understanding of the recommendation that was set at the last inspection. The childminder's emergency policy includes information on what the childminder would do in a medical emergency, such as call for an ambulance, so that parents are clear about the procedures she would follow should this situation ever occur. However, specific individual consent has not been obtained from parents to allow for this, which promotes good practice, and a recommendation has been set following this inspection to ensure this is put into place.

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

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.

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):

- ensure permission is gained from parents to allow the childminder to act in the children's best interests in the event of an emergency
- ensure the fire blanket is wall mounted in the kitchen

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