

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	505737
Inspection date	01 April 2008
Inspector	Sylvia Dindar
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 has been registered since 2000 and is registered to care for six children. She currently has six children on roll. The childminder lives with her husband in a house in Uckfield, close to local shops, woodland, and schools. The whole of the ground floor of the property and an upstairs toilet are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a pet.

The childminder is a qualified primary school teacher. She has also completed a NVQ level 3 in Early Years and paediatric first aid training. The childminder's husband works as her assistant when needed.

The childminder attends a local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. She has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children good health is protected because they are cared for in a very well maintained, very clean environment. The childminder has a very clear understanding of and actively follows robust procedures in relation to health and hygiene. Children learn about simple good hygiene practices, such as how to wash their hands and why this is a necessary part of the daily routine. Pictures are displayed above the sink to show children how to wash their hands properly. As an additional reminder another poster displayed on the door of the toilet reminds them about washing hands. They have easily identified individual towels which are colour coded and this prevents cross-infection.

Children benefit as the childminder has up-to-date knowledge and training in first aid and she has secured parental permission in order for her to access emergency medical care in their absence. This means she can deal with medical emergencies effectively. Robust systems are in place for the safe administration of medication and these include well documented records. This helps to ensure that children's health is fully safeguarded

Children really enjoy mealtimes because they are social occasions where they get to sit with the childminder and other children. Food is attractively served in order to make it interesting for children. At lunch time parents are asked to provide food for their children, which is safely stored in the fridge. Parent are given a diet sheet which gives them advice and suggestions on healthy options for their children in order to keep them healthy. Children are provided with healthy snacks of fruit and are encouraged to drink water regularly. They have plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and children regularly visit a local allotment and harvest these. When they return home they learn how to clean and prepare them ready for their meal. Children enjoy planting and growing their own tomatoes in pots in the garden. They are involved in watering and caring for them and then are able to enjoy the efforts of their labour. Each child gets the opportunity to choose their favourite food which the childminder makes from fresh ingredients giving children an added interest in what they are eating. Meals are very well thought out, balanced and nutritious, in order to meet their individual dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is paramount. The childminder shows excellent knowledge of how to minimise risks in order to keep children safe both in her home and when outside. Children are made welcome and thrive in this well organised child friendly secure environment. They are able to safely access a wide range of safe, clean, robust toys and equipment that are suitable for their age and stage of development. Regular risk assessments are made and any causes for concern are dealt with immediately. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure assessments are in line with their children's age and stage of development. The use of suitable safety equipment, such as safety gates to prevent children accessing dangerous areas such as the kitchen ensures children's safety and well-being is promoted.

Children have access to the ground floor which is a main area for play. This area is bright and cheerful and well maintained. Children's art work, photographs and certificates of achievements adorn the walls. They can independently access the toilet area as they are provided with a step in order for them to reach the toilet and sink. They are happy to go to bed to rest because the

sleep room is well prepared, calm, uncluttered and favourite comforters are close at hand in order to settle children to sleep. Children are monitored and physically checked when they are sleeping to ensure they are safe.

Children routinely practise the emergency evaluation procedure with the childminder, so that they become familiar with the practice. The childminder evaluates these ensuring that children can be quickly and safely evacuated in an emergency. Children learn to keep themselves safe, because the childminder helps them think through the process. For example, she asks children what might happen if we leave the toys all over the floor and what they might do about it to avoid tripping. Children learn about road safety as the childminder ensures that they understand about the safe places to cross and how they must look and listen. In addition to close supervision of children on outings the childminder ensures that children have identification bands on them. She ensures her contact number is on them so that she can be contacted straight away. Children learn how to keep their bodies safe. The childminder recognises that children find it difficult to scream 'No' to an adult, so she routinely allows them to practise this in order for them to feel confident.

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection policies and procedures and ensures she attends regular training in order to keep her practice effective. This actively contributes to children's safety and well-being. She shares a well written policy with parents and carers which explains that children are her first priority. Parents and carers are made aware that the childminder's ultimate responsibility is the safety and welfare of the children she cares for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a wonderful time with the childminder and are very well settled, happy and stimulated in this family orientated environment. They hugely benefit from the childminder's experience and extensive knowledge of child development, as she meticulously plans individual play plans for children in order for them develop and learn. She uses the Birth to three matters framework and the early year's curriculum very successfully, in order for children to reach their full potential. She recognises that children learn best when they are engaged in activities of their choosing and plans an excellent balance of child and adult initiated activities. The children concentrate very well and show an excellent rapport with their childminder, involving her in their play. In return she listens well to what they have to say and gives them lots of praise and encouragement. The children are involved in the planning from the outset. They have been given a digital camera to take photographs of the toys and resources and places that they regularly attend, for example, the local schools, the cosy bed they sleep in, their local woodland and the dolls house which they love to play with. These photographs have been laminated and placed in a plastic folder. Each day children discuss what they need to do and what they want to do. They then make up their picture timetable and display it on the window. This activity involves decision and negotiating skills which builds children's confidence and self-esteem. They learn about time and to think of the needs of others.

Children learn about numbers and maths through every day activities, such as singing, or counting their shoes as they put them on. They measure themselves and record how tall they are and compare whether they are tall or short. They use an extensive range of computer programmes and learn to count and how to grade items such the size of saucepans. They explore the local woodland looking for wild flowers and use books and computers to research and identify them. They report back to environmental groups telling them about their findings.

They take part in bird watching surveys and report on what they find in their garden, developing their observation skills and knowledge of wild life.

Children are excited as the childminder presents the story sack filled with interesting textured objects. They are keen to start the activity and are encouraged by the childminder to close their eyes and use their sense of touch to explore what is in the bright bag designed with musical notes. The expression of concentration and anticipation on their face shows they really engage in this activity. Once they have captured the object, they explain what they have got and immediately shout out the title of a song related to it. For example, a child shouts out 'I got Miss Polly has a dolly'. They sing confidently remembering the words and doing the actions. Their learning is further extended as the childminder adds new verses for them to learn. As a result of this very well thought out simple game, children are confident as they sing and have learned the actions to an extensive range of nursery rhymes and songs, which has greatly enhanced their language skills.

Children are developing a love of books and have free choice of an extensive range. They are keen to snuggle up with their childminder and invite her to read to them. She involves them in the story asking questions that make them think. She pauses whilst they ask questions allowing them time to freely express themselves and explore the pictures and their thoughts. For example, they say how much they enjoy the sunshine because it makes them feel happy and the childminder acknowledges their feeling and tells them it makes her feel happy too. Children are learning to be independent as they access toys and resources themselves. For example, they find a tissue and wipe their nose and they are learning to dress and undress themselves when going to the toilet. The childminder makes tidy-up time fun, so children are keen to take part and learning to be responsible and take care of things. They sit to the table at meal times and the childminder reminds about their manners and why they should not talk with their mouth full. Children readily say 'please' and 'thank you' as the childminder is a good role model and they mirror her excellent example.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children behave very well because they feel secure and happy and their individual needs are very well met. The childminder is an excellent role model and children are treated with respect. She talks to them calmly and politely and shows genuine care and concern for them as well as sharing a joke. Through play, children learn to care about the environment and how to consider and care for others. The excellent rapport between the childminder and the children means that they feel safe to discuss and test out boundaries whilst in her care. She gently corrects them and reminds them how their behaviour affects others and makes others feel. She suggests strategies to help them cope. They are given meaningful praise and encouragement throughout the day and are very proud to wear the stickers they receive for important achievements. For example, stickers are used when a child completes a more complex puzzle for the first time or learns to recognise the need for the toilet. Children feel a real sense of belonging in this nurturing and very friendly environment. Their work and photographs are displayed, giving them a sense of worth. They have somewhere to keep their personal belongings and are involved in choosing new resources, for example, new bedding for their bed. When children arrive home from school the childminder encourages them all to sit together and talk about their day.

The partnership with parents is very good and an integral part in the successful care of children. The childminder has built up trusting relationships by involving and discussing all aspects of childcare and development. Through highly effective settling in procedures she gathers and

records information from parents about their children. This allows her to plan and provide for children's individual needs very effectively. For example she asks about children's likes and dislikes, what comforts them when they are distressed, special words that they might use and about their general sleep routines. In addition she gathers information on their health, dietary needs and religious needs which are recorded and used effectively. She takes an interest in the children's family lives and learns what is important to them so she is able to talk about and value their home life. Parents are encouraged to discuss behaviour management and potty training and agree the best approach for their individual child. In addition they are presented with a copy of the childminder's professionally presented portfolio which includes the policies and procedures. These clearly explain what they can expect of the childminder and she of them. She asks them to take this home to read and they are given the time to discuss any concerns before signing to say they find them agreeable. This clear communication is continuous as the childminder provides parents with daily diaries and makes time at the end of the day to discuss their individual children, so that they can provide continuity of care at home. Parents have access to children's tracker development books and all records are shared, so parents are very well informed. Photographs are taken of children engaged in meaningful activities throughout the day and at quieter moments the childminder sends them to parents via the internet. Therefore, parents have a snapshot of the child's day and feel reassured that their children are well and happy.

Children are learning about other cultures and beliefs through an excellent range of well thought out and planned activities. For example, they have agreed to sponsor a child from another country. They write letters, draw pictures and send photographs and presents. They enjoy hearing about the child's life and learn to understand and value the differences. They learn that all children have an equal right to have their own ambitions and dreams whatever their gender or circumstances. The childminder has an excellent range of multicultural resources, particularly recipe books and children enjoy choosing things to make and enjoy sampling the food. They learn how people have different ways of eating and enjoy exploring this for themselves as they practise eating with chopsticks. They learn to value others beliefs as they celebrate festivals other than their own. They have the opportunity to speak and learn German as the childminder provides children with simple phrases.

The childminder has excellent systems in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in which she is trained and experienced. She works alongside parents and other professionals to ensure that she maximises the opportunities to ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminders highly organised and professional approach to childminding. She is extremely confident in her own abilities and as a result provides excellent care and education to the children in her care. As a result children are offered high quality opportunities which are rooted in an expert knowledge of childcare and development. She uses her prior knowledge as a primary school teacher to best effect, balancing this experience with new training and ideas. She is constantly seeking ways to improve her skills in order to provide positive outcomes for children. She is an active childminder tutor and so is constantly in touch with other professionals ensuring she is aware of any changes to regulations and ensures her core training is up-to-date. She has recently embarked on the pilot study for the Early Years Foundation stage in order to be well prepared to implement the changes made by government. She has excellent knowledge of the National Standards. This is evident as she has prepared

well for her inspection and evaluated her practice. She keeps clear and effective records in order to support children's care, learning and development and these are shared with parents. All records required by regulation are efficiently kept and meet the requirements of regulation. She has an excellent range of well thought out policies and procedures which she regularly reviews and shares with parents. Contractual agreements with parents are in place ensuring that that business side of her childminding service runs smoothly. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the childminder was asked to continue to extend resources that show positive images of race, culture, religion, and disability. She has done this well and added a wide range of resources and activities. As a result children's experience of diversity is enriched.

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 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