

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 114634
Inspection date 13 February 2008
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 two school aged children in the Durrington area of Worthing, West Sussex.

The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time. She is currently minding 11 children on a part-time basis.

The family has two guinea pigs and some goldfish.

The childminder lives close to the local shops, schools and a park.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has completed the Quality First Assurance Scheme.

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 has a food hygiene certificate. This ensures that children's meals and snacks are prepared in accordance with good food hygiene practice. The childminder has an excellent understanding and awareness of healthy routines and children get many opportunities to become independent in their personal care. Attractive low level posters encourage healthy living habits and advise children to drink lots of water, eat fruit and wash their hands before eating. Children begin to understand why certain routines are important because of careful explanations from the childminder. They enthusiastically wash and dry their hands after visiting the toilet and use wipes before eating their food. The childminder encourages children to think about their own personal needs, for example, when they require a tissue to wipe their nose.

The childminder has a current first aid certificate. This means she can administer first aid in the event of an accident. She has an excellent understanding of how to care for children if they become ill and she has guidance on infection control. There are clear, written details for parents about infectious children. This ensures that unwanted contagious diseases are not spread. The childminder prevents the spread of infections by good hygiene procedures in her home. These include reminding children to cover their mouth when they cough and regular hand washing. The childminder has written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment. All mandatory records relating to medicine administration and accidents are maintained to an excellent standard.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the importance of a balanced diet and really promotes healthy eating. Children regularly enjoy a wide range of fresh fruit for their snack, such as mango, pear and melon. In the summer, they grow fruit and vegetables in the childminder's garden. Wall charts stimulate discussion about many healthy eating topics. Children enjoy home cooked meals, for example, salmon, pasta or shepherd's pie. Children are very independent and their choices are respected. They feed themselves in a suitable way and help themselves to fresh drinking water from a cup or a water dispenser.

The childminder gives children an array of opportunities to have regular exercise and to develop a healthy lifestyle. Each day they take part in physical activities. At local parks, they develop their coordination skills on the climbing frame and enjoy practising their ball skills. At regular toddler groups, they play in the ball pool and on the bouncy castle. Children have plenty of fresh air when they visit Goring Gap. They develop their large muscle skills on the wheeled vehicles and enjoy flying a kite. In the summer months, children play in the childminder's garden and explore the sand tray.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming, child-friendly environment. The walls are adorned with attractive learning resources and the children's pictures. Children thoroughly enjoy an extensive range of high quality toys and an impressive collection of books. These are in excellent condition, well maintained and cleaned regularly. Space within the house is well organised. This allows toddlers and young children to move around safely and independently. They confidently and enthusiastically choose their favourite toys and resources. Young children

show an exceptional ability to make their own decisions about how they would like to spend their time in the childminder's home.

The childminder has an excellent understanding and awareness of safety issues. This means that children are very well protected from harm, and play in a safe and secure environment. The childminder does daily checks before the children arrive. For example, she checks the socket covers are in place, the cleaning materials are out of reach and that the floor and cloths are clean. She has identified potential hazards through written risk assessments. The childminder has clear written evacuation details on the wall and has regular fire drills. This means children know how to evacuate the house and look after themselves in the event of an emergency.

Children are kept safe on outings because the childminder has well thought-out procedures and routines. She has written risk assessments for outings and a range of appropriate car seats. Children know what is expected, for example, they must wait at the gate and if necessary hold hands. When they arrive at the destination, the childminder checks a number of safety items. These include looking for hazards and ensuring that the play equipment is safe.

Children are extremely well protected because the childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in child protection. She is confident and would recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse. The childminder has a wealth of documentation and contact numbers, and knows what action to take if she had concerns about a child in her care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting. This is because they have an excellent range of opportunities to develop their independence and participate in an extensive range of stimulating activities. They are cared for by a childminder who really shows an interest and spends time to build close relationships with individuals. These factors mean that children are happy, settled and totally absorbed in worthwhile activities throughout the day.

The childminder has an excellent working knowledge of 'Birth to three matters'. Each child has a comprehensive development file and an individual daily diary. These include details of observations and show progress in all aspects of their learning. This means that children take part in activities that are extremely relevant to their individual stage of development.

Children are animated as they choose from an excellent range of quality resources and explore them with enthusiasm. These features coupled with the childminder's interaction and perception of individual needs mean that children have quality learning experiences. For example, during a malleable activity the childminder responds to the children's interest in the smell of the play-dough, the crinkly scissors and their interest in counting the star shapes.

When appropriate, the childminder encourages conversation and the development of early communication skills. For example, when children choose to play with the small animals, the childminder's skilful dialogue encourages them to attempt their own words and also to learn new vocabulary from her sensitive interaction. This means children have a positive attitude to new experiences and are developing a good self-esteem.

Young children are enthralled as they select role play activities and play alongside a friend. They spend an extended period of time interacting with the buttons of the washing machine and microwave. This means they get a real understanding of how to perform simple functions

on everyday technology. They develop their coordination skills when they spend time exploring kitchen utensils and hang them carefully on a utensil rack.

Children take part in an extensive range of creative activities. These include tactile experiences for young children, such as exploring blue slime and looking at the bubbles they make. During a topic on different types of skin, children experiment and discover various aspects of colour mixing and do sponge painting to create people with various skin tones.

Children develop an awareness of the world about them by an impressive range of outings and outdoor activities. This means they really learn about the environment from first hand experience. For example, in the childminder's garden they plant and enthusiastically watch the growth of strawberries, tomatoes and sunflowers. The childminder responds to the interests of individual children and plans trips to meet their needs. For example, a child's interest in farming means they visit a local farm to see the lambing, while another child's interest in trains means the children go on a train ride. This personalised approach to learning means children are enthusiastic and motivated.

Overall, the childminder's excellent knowledge of child development and her impressive individual records mean that children show high levels of independence, curiosity and concentration while at her home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children and their families are welcomed by the childminder. She has an excellent understanding of individuality and treats each child as a special person. The childminder has a very good knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities. She really helps children to develop a positive attitude to diversity. Children learn about other cultures through an impressive range of resources and activities. During Chinese New Year, they make lanterns, explore red paint with glitter and taste Chinese food at a restaurant. Young children explore their world through sensory activities. At Christmas, they mould play-dough that is scented with cinnamon and other fragrances. Children are actively involved in community events and learn to think about the needs of other people. They take part in local carnivals and raise money for a charity during a sponsored pedal push.

Although the childminder has not cared for children with a learning difficulties or disabilities she has some experience of additional needs. She would be happy to look after a child with individual requirements if she was able to meet their needs alongside those of the other children. The childminder's house has a downstairs toilet so is suitable for a child with physical disabilities.

Children behave exceptionally well at the childminder's home. This is because the childminder is consistent and has a considered approach. She uses a range of effective behaviour management strategies. These include distraction, gentle reminders and clear explanations. The childminder encourages children to say sorry. If children do not respond, the childminder removes them from the situation and they sit quietly on the sofa to think. Older children write their own rules and these include, be kind, tidy up and share. This means they are involved with their own behaviour. Children benefit from lots of praise and positive encouragement. This means they have a good self-esteem and are confident to try new ideas.

The childminder has excellent written information for parents and carers. This helps to foster a meaningful partnership with parents and significantly contributes to the welfare of the

children. Parents who are interested in using the childminder's service visit her home and browse a parent information pack. This includes a well thought-out and intuitive settling in policy, a complaints procedure, and arrival and collection policy. Daily communication with parents is verbal. However, the childminder offers the option of a daily written diary. Parents have regular newsletters, photographs of their children and a parent's information board. These factors mean that parents know about many aspects of their children's care. The childminder seeks feedback in order to improve her service. Recent comments state that children are happy at handover time, receive a well balanced diet and that the childminder is calm and patient.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the excellent quality of organisation. The childminder has a professional approach, is dedicated and strives to improve her service. She keeps up-to-date with changes to legislation and current childcare practice. The childminder has attended a number of relevant training courses. These include supporting children to read, keeping children safe and an Early Years Foundation Stage briefing. This means that children are cared for by a childminder with an impressive understanding of the needs of young children and childminding issues.

The childminder's home is effectively organised, with clear areas to maximise the play opportunities for the children. This means they can easily move around freely and independently. Although there is plenty of adult attention, children have many opportunities to make their own decisions, choose favourite resources and initiate their own play and learning.

The childminder has all mandatory documentation in place. This is maintained to an excellent standard and securely stored. She has many well written, informative policies and procedures, for example, confidentiality and behaviour management. These enhance and support the childminder's service.

Parents know about their child's day because of a very good range of information. 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

At the last inspection, the childminder was asked to ensure that all records relating to childminding activities are kept in appropriate detail.

The childminder maintains all childminding records to an excellent standard. This enhances the continuity of the children's care.

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.

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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