

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY292097
Inspection date	08 February 2008
Inspector	Ruth Thrasher
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 2004. She lives with her husband in a semi-detached cottage in the Cornish village of East Taphouse, between the towns of Liskeard and Lostwithiel. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. A fully enclosed garden is available for outside play.

The childminder cares for 13 children aged from one year to 11 years at various times throughout the week.

The family have one Labrador dog that is not usually at home during the day.

The childminder drives to local schools and pre-school to take and collect children and attends the local toddler group. She also visits parks and libraries with the children.

She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has a level 3 qualification in child care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle in the childminder's care. They have a large garden in which to play and have regular outings and walks to places where they can run up and down and enjoy the fresh air and exercise. Weekly visits to a soft play centre enable them to develop their physical skills. Their good health is supported by comprehensive, well maintained documentation and the childminder's pro-active approach to ensuring her first aid qualification is updated, booking in for another course well in advance of her qualification expiring. The risk of cross-infection is reduced because the childminder is very clear about her sick child policy and each child has their own individual hand towel hung in the bathroom with their name above it.

Children enjoy healthy, well-balanced home cooked food, prepared by the childminder. They sit at the table to eat their meals and snacks and their own individually made placemats, with their photograph and names on them, make meal times special. They enjoy a variety of fruit for snack and home-made vegetable soup with bread for lunch. The childminder has completed a course on 'Safer Food, Healthier Children' as well as updating her food hygiene certificate. She uses a food probe to make sure food is re-heated to a safe temperature and this ensures food eaten by the children is safe to eat. Children learn about where their food comes from as the childminder's husband has a vegetable patch and they see the vegetables growing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy lots of space to play in the comfortable and child-friendly environment. There is a dedicated play room that is set out with an excellent range of toys and equipment that the children can access independently. Colourful posters on the wall and children's pictures make the childminder's home a fun place to be. There is lots of space to play in the large garden, which is well equipped with outdoor play equipment and a table and chairs for picnics with friends in the summer. Younger children are well catered for as the childminder has a comprehensive range of equipment to meet their care needs, such as high-chairs that fix to dining room chairs and enable the babies to join in.

Children are safe when they play because the childminder completes a thorough risk assessment every six months as well as daily visual checks. She ensures that the premises and equipment are well-maintained and that the premises are secure at all times. The children regularly practise fire drills so that they can be safely evacuated in the event of an emergency. They are safe when they travel in the childminder's car as she has a range of car seats suitable for each developmental stage.

Children are safeguarded by the childminder's detailed knowledge of child protection issues and the signs and symptoms of abuse. She has undertaken training in child protection and is clear about who to contact should she have any concerns about the children in her care or should an allegation be made against her practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an excellent range of fun and challenging activities with the childminder, including regular outings to the woods, the beach and local adventure parks where they can have fun and let off steam. All children under four years have their own file with observations and photographic records of their achievements, recorded in line with the Birth to three matters framework. In this way the childminder can identify what the children need to do next to enable them to develop and progress, for example to provide babies who are learning to walk with opportunities to stand and pull themselves up. Children are given freedom to choose the activities they want to do and the childminder is very aware of their favourite activities, such as play dough. She makes masses of play dough herself and provides lots of shape cutters and rollers so that the children can roll and shape the dough. Younger children are able to join in, sitting on the childminder's knee as she helps them roll the dough.

Children's language and communication skills are very well supported as the childminder is undertaking a nine session course on 'Learning Language and Loving it' led by local speech therapists. She interacts constantly with the children, developing their language skills and introducing them to new vocabulary.

Children are settled into a familiar routine that makes them feel confident and secure. They have regular snacks and meal times, have a sleep on their own cot or mattress in the lounge after lunch, and often have an outing in the afternoon.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn about diversity through some original and engaging activities, such as learning about Chinese New Year and the story of the animals in the Chinese zodiac. They play with a range of quality resources, such as books that develop awareness of different faiths and people from different backgrounds, and puppets depicting a variety of people in a range of different occupations. The childminder has attended an inclusion workshop and therefore has ideas of how to include all children by adapting a range of activities. She is aware that some children have additional needs and ensures that these needs are met, for example by sourcing specific products to meet the children's dietary requirements. In addition she has good awareness of support for children with specific needs, having attended a variety of workshops on subjects such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and working with the bereaved child.

Children learn about good behaviour through the childminder's positive approach to behaviour management and her awareness of using an approach that takes into account the child's developmental stage and understanding. Older children help to put together the 'house rules' for acceptable behaviour, with an emphasis on the things they should rather than should not do. Children learn table manners as they sit at the table for meals and snacks and learn to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

There is an informative notice board for parents, who are also given copies of the written policies that the childminder uses to support the care of the children. All required parental permissions are in place and there is a system for recording any complaints in line with regulations. Parents appreciate the flexibility that the childminder provides, ensuring that she is able to care for their children should extra sessions be required or days changed. A home

book is used to exchange information between parent and carer and this promotes continuity of care for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very well organised and child centred environment. The childminder is an experienced child care worker with a level 3 qualification. She is proactive in ensuring her training is up to date and aware of her responsibility to ensure children are well supervised at all times. She organises her routine and her premises to ensure she can devote all her time to the children, and an example of her daily routine is displayed for parents to see. She is able to collect children from three local schools and a pre-school and provides out of school care as well as care for younger children during the day.

The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides. The outstanding level of care is supported by comprehensive written policies and documentation that exceed the requirements of the National Standards. She is fully aware of the need to inform Ofsted of any significant events or changes.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the childminder has developed her sleep charts to record the times the children are checked and whether the child is sleeping soundly, further enhancing the safety of children in her 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 include 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