

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	102456
Inspection date	26 February 2008
Inspector	Anne-Marie Moyse

Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives with her husband and two adult children. The family have two dogs, which can be kept in kennels outside. They live in a house on the outskirts of the village of St Dominick. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with a bedroom on the first floor where a cot is available for younger children to sleep during the day. There is a secure outside area for play.

She is registered to provide care for six children under the age of eight years, of these, not more than one may be under one year. Currently she cares for a total of 14 children aged between six months and 11 years. Of these, nine children are aged under eight years, and attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder provides nursery education for four children.

The childminder holds a level three qualification in childcare and education, and has been awarded the National Childminding Association Quality Assurance Award - Quality First.

Children are taken out regularly for walks, visits to the library, singing and toddler groups, plus other places of interest.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a fantastic time and wonderful opportunities to explore the local environment and natural world, to help keep them fit and healthy. Children regularly go on invigorating nature walks to the neighbouring fields and farms, climbing trees and learning to balance using natural materials, such as rocks and tree stumps. They often become involved in picking their own flowers from the daffodil fields, or following the life cycle of the animals that surround them, visiting them frequently to monitor their progress. Children learn how to dress appropriately for the weather conditions, independently putting on their warm coats and Wellington boots to go puddle jumping or for a brisk walk with the dogs. They regularly play in the outdoor area, with the sand or gravel pits, riding on the wheeled toys or helping with the gardening. Children receive a good balance of opportunities to rest and relax as well as being active.

Children are cared for in an impeccably clean and tidy home. Children can quickly become independent in their personal hygiene routines as facilities are well organised and easy for children to reach. They know why it is important to wash their hands hygienically before eating and after toileting. The childminder reminds children to brush their teeth after eating their lunch to keep their teeth clean. The childminder develops children's understanding of keeping themselves healthy by planning visits to various health specialists, such as the dentist and the opticians. This gives children an excellent understanding and awareness of self-care and promoting good health routines.

Children are very well cared for in the event of an accident as the childminder has attended appropriate first aid training and has well stocked first aid kits. Clear documentation and records are maintained to ensure that safe procedures are employed if children should require any emergency treatment or medication.

Children benefit from the emphasis the childminder places on eating a very nutritious and balanced diet. Children are offered a wide variety of fresh fruits for snack, and are provided with a substantial selection of apples, pears and bananas for mid-morning snack. Children are involved in organising the table and foods for lunch, as the childminder freshly prepares them a healthy sandwich or light lunch. Children are provided with a wholesome and nutritious main meal in the evenings, which includes plenty of local ingredients including organic vegetables grown in the neighbourhood. They are encouraged to drink milk or water during the day, keeping them hydrated and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is given the utmost priority. Children are warmly welcomed into the home, where a dedicated play room has been made available to them. This spacious and comfortable area is well organised with children being able to reach the extensive range of good quality toys and resources. The room is arranged so children can use different areas for various activities, such as a small table and chairs for games and craft activities, or to crawl under the large table to make a den and read books, or to use the role-play area. Wonderful charts, posters and children's art work are displayed around this area, making it a very appealing and stimulating area.

Children are kept very safe in the home as the childminder has assessed all the areas of the premises for any risks. Children's understanding of safety is developed by the thorough and comprehensive procedures adopted by the childminder. They are involved in regular fire drills, where they are encouraged to deal with different scenarios. For example, the childminder will place a broom in an exit so children have to negotiate an alternative route, or children wear blindfolds to represent not being able to see in a smoke filled room. The childminder ensures that children are familiar with general safety awareness such as not running indoors or climbing on furniture, and the consequences of what may happen if these guidelines are not followed. Children are encouraged to help tidy away toys to prevent them becoming tripping hazards.

Children are kept safe on outings as the childminder has robust procedures in place to ensure all hazards are considered. All insurances and documentation are meticulously maintained with parents giving consent for all outings and visits. Children are familiar with the routine to wait on the step until every one is ready to leave the home, maintaining their security and safety. The childminder rigorously supervises children at all times, including making regular visual checks on sleeping babies.

Children's safety is further safeguarded as the childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection procedures. She regularly updates her training in this area and has a wealth of materials to support and guide her if required. She has a clear understanding of her role and responsibility and ensures that this is shared with parents. She keeps excellent records to support children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a superb time with the childminder. They arrive with lots of smiles and are eager to meet with their friends and start playing immediately. Children build trusting relationships with the childminder and benefit from the warm interaction. The childminder uses her excellent understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and her vast experiences to ensure that games and activities are well matched to children's individual interests and stage of development. The outdoor environment is used exceptionally well, with all children benefiting from developing their play and activities around the natural world. Older children are given more independence and the opportunity to take greater risks. For example, they make dens and camps using tools

and equipment to realise their ideas, and learn how to safely make camp fires. This helps children to develop their problem solving ability and a respect for their environment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making rapid progress in all areas of learning and have a very positive disposition towards learning. Children are fully involved and engrossed in the activities on offer. They relish the opportunity to make decisions and choose from the resource on offer, sustaining their interest and developing their play with the sensitive support from the childminder. For example, children enjoy lining up all the small world ponies for a race, talking about the different types of horses. This is developed by making start lines and jumps for the ponies out of construction sets, measuring and comparing the length. One child makes a picture for the winner, and a flag to start the race. Resources such as tape and straws are easily accessible so children can transform their paper into real flags. Through regular observations and assessments the childminder has a clear understanding of the stage each child is currently working at, and uses this information to carefully plan the next step for their learning. Children's progress files are exceptionally well documented and enhanced with the use of photographs, showing children's progress across all areas of learning. These assessments are very well used and shared with parents frequently so they can contribute to all aspects of their child's care and learning.

Children use their mathematical skills at snack time when they count how many place mats and plates are needed, and how many pieces the fruit is cut into, calculating as they eat the pieces. They recognise patterns and notice similarities and differences, in the shapes of the fruit. Children recognise significant numbers and have a good understanding of measuring. For example, when the children are outside they remark at the shape of a cloud resembling the number three. Children are avid conversationalists, talking and developing their language skills throughout the day. They benefit from the good adult ratio, with the childminder skilled at encouraging children to develop their confidence and vocabulary. Books are used very well with children using them for pleasure and to look up information, such as naming the birds seen at the bird feeder. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their reading skills, as they frequently recognise their names and letters on notices used around the home. They are using phonics well to develop a link between letters and sounds. Children are observant and naturally curious, which is stimulated by the outside world. Children are frequently taken on trips and visits around their local environment, visiting neighbouring farms, market gardens and woodland areas. They watch as the seasons change and the animals grow and develop. They eagerly observe a local building project, visiting it at various stages to see how a home is built, giving children valuable first hand experiences and extend their knowledge.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's sense of belonging and self-esteem is fostered by the childminder taking a genuine interest in them. Consequently, children are happy, settled and confident in the childminder's care. Children are very well behaved and polite because the childminder provides an excellent role model and treats everyone with respect. Children are praised and their achievements celebrated, boosting their confidence and self-worth. They respond well to the consistent and

high expectations of the childminder, sharing well and thoughtfully playing together. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the outstanding relationship developed between the parents and the childminder, ensuring that valuable information is constantly exchanged promoting consistent care for each child. The childminder has an excellent understanding of each child's different needs and requirements. The parents receive extensive information on all aspects of the childminding arrangement, including an excellent set of policies and procedures. Daily verbal feedback is given to parents and a written diary keeps a log of each child's day and general well-being, keeping parents fully informed and involved with the child's time when they are being minded. The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is outstanding. Parents are fully informed on the themes and programme children will be following for their nursery education sessions. This is often reflective of children's own interests and individual preferences. For example, children who are soon receiving their inoculations are involved in activities on health and their own bodies, visiting the Doctor's surgery and hospitals to reassure and develop their understanding of health care. Parents are involved in the assessment system, providing valuable information on what children can do and what their next step in learning may be. Parents view their children's formal observation file each month, and are provided with good opportunities to make comments and monitor their child's progress. The childminder ensures that parents are given excellent ideas and suggestions on how they can best support their children's learning at home with simple tasks.

Children learn about their own and others' cultures through meaningful activities and playing with toys and resources which reflect positive images of diversity. The children use photographs and posters of other children in the world during activities to show how different people live and dress. This sparks their curiosity to ask questions and learn about other children, which is well supported by the childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding. The children visit various groups, to meet and socialise with other children. The childminder liaises very closely with parents over children's specific needs and offers appropriate support to each child. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for as the childminder is experienced and has attended various training. The childminder links in closely with parents to ensure that children receive the best possible care and support needed.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit tremendously by being cared for in an extremely well organised environment, by a childminder who is sensitive, caring and totally committed to providing the best possible care for children. She plans and prepares a stimulating and delightful range of activities for the children, making excellent use of the local rural environment. Children benefit from her enthusiasm to attend further training to continue to develop her knowledge and understanding of all aspects of childcare and education. All the required documentation is meticulously maintained, well ordered and easily accessible if required. Parents receive a wealth of written and verbal information keeping them well informed on all aspects of the childminding business.

The good organisational skills of the childminder have a positive impact on the quality of the nursery education provided for children, which is outstanding. The children benefit from the

clear and detailed attention given to their planned activities, which includes regular visits to local places of interest giving children first hand experiences of daily life. The childminder continues to constantly review and develop her practice through further training and seeking advice from local support networks and organisations. The childminder meets the care and nursery education needs of the range of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to maintain details of all the persons living or working on the premises. This has been addressed, ensuring that parents are fully informed of who may be in contact with their children.

This is the childminder's first Nursery Education inspection.

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 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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education 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