



Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	115105
Inspection date	06 April 2006
Inspector	Jill Steer

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.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1994. She lives with her 3 children aged 12, 14, and 16 years, in Worthing, West Sussex. She works with another childminder as Patacakes Childminding Service, from her home, also in Worthing. The whole of the house is used for childminding purposes, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding three children on a part time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. Patacakes Childminding Service has one

cat and one rabbit. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy many activities out of doors which helps them begin to develop a healthy lifestyle. They walk to and from the local school each day, and frequently go for walks in the fresh air to local venues such as the park or shops. They spend much of their time occupied in the garden where children develop their physical skills. For example they pedal the bikes up and down the pathway, kick the balls skilfully to one another, dig the garden, and take their dolls for a walk, manoeuvring the buggy around the tree and the rabbit run. Children are able to enjoy some outings which are particularly suitable for their individual age and interests, as the co-minders plan carefully for these occasions so all children benefit. For example, one childminder may take older children to visit the horses while the other stays behind with the younger children.

The meals are currently provided by the children's parents, and the childminder offers a healthy selection of fresh fruit at snack times. Children's specific dietary needs are recorded to ensure the childminder is aware of any foods which may not be suitable for some children. For example, making sure they are not wheat intolerant when there is birthday cake to share. The children sit together sociably to eat at child sized tables, with the childminder nearby to offer encouragement, and taking the opportunity to talk about healthy foods. Children drink from their own cups, which they are able ask for whenever they are thirsty, ensuring they do not de-hydrate.

Established daily routines help children develop good personal hygiene and self care skills. They wash their hands using a fun, pump action soap dispenser and paper towels, which allows them to manage independently and reduces the spread of infection. Children know they are expected to wash after handling the guinea pig or cat, after using the toilet and at mealtimes. They receive helpful guidance such as requesting they wash their hands after handling the animals. Children are well cared for if they become unwell until they are collected by their parents, who are expected to keep them home until better, to prevent the spread of any infection to the other children. All medication they are given is clearly noted in their individual record books, and signed by their parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy spending their time in the well organised and cheerful playroom. The walls are decorated with brightly coloured posters providing additional interest for children, such as numbers and letters of the alphabet. Many of the wide selection of toys and resources are stored in large, brightly coloured tubs at floor level, allowing

children to easily choose for themselves what to play with, which helps build their confidence. The equipment is of good quality and provides stimulation and sufficient challenge for all ages and abilities of children. The playroom leads directly to the secure garden, so children are free to safely move from inside to outside. Playing where they choose develops their independence whilst they remain under the constant supervision of the childminder.

Outings are well organised so children are kept safe. If all the children are taken out together, the childminder is accompanied by her co-minder so the high adult ratio ensures children are well supervised. They hold on to the buggy and look both ways for cars before crossing the road, they stay with the childminder at all times, learning about keeping themselves safe. However, not all adults living in the childminding setting have been vetted to ensure they are cleared to be around children.

Children are cared for in safe surroundings because the childminder's have taken many safety precautions. For example toys with small pieces are stored on high shelves out of reach of the youngest children, and the local Fire Officer visited to advise on suitable equipment to protect the home. However one smoke detector and the fire blanket have not been fitted which prevents them operating correctly. The childminder has a clear understanding of her role regarding the protection of children. She advises the parents of her responsibility and knows how to record and refer any concerns she may have to safeguard the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled with the childminder. They benefit from a broad range of activities which are planned to contribute to their all round care and development. For example, as an Easter activity, the children are shown pictures which they identify as a chicken, a duck and an ostrich. They then see and hold with great interest, the eggs that they have laid, comparing the size, weight, colour and texture. Then to their amazement, they are shown real chicks that hatched out of an egg, they happily stroke them and listen to them chirp.

The childminder provides constant support to children, asking questions which encourage them to think and make their own decisions about what they do. For example, whilst playing a matching game, the childminder asks what sounds each of the animals make in the pictures, giving suitable praise and encouragement to build the children's confidence. The ongoing conversations helps to develop children's language and listening skills, and develop the friendly relationship they have with the childminder. Children's achievements are acknowledged as their work is displayed for them to proudly show to their parents and each other.

Children's individual needs are incorporated into the daily routines easily with two childminder's present for much of the time. For example, the childminder and the older children occupied with a matching game whilst a younger child is with the co-minder and an activity table. Activities are organised to ensure there is something to stimulate and interest children of all ages and abilities. When children become restless at one activity the childminder quickly redirects their attention elsewhere,

finding something else to occupy them. Children can rest or be active as they prefer, their individual routines being incorporated each day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well with the childminder. The interesting activities provided keep them occupied, so few conflicts arise. Children receive constant praise which encourages them to continue to behave well. The presentation of stickers enables children's parents to clearly see they have behaved, well as they proudly wear them on their clothes. Children are treated with respect and listened to, which helps them feel valued and develops their self-esteem. Children's additional needs are identified, and the childminder will adapt the service she provides to include the support needed for their individual development.

Children settle well in the care of the childminder, as they observe her friendly relationship with their parents which helps build trusting relationships between them. Information is shared with parents on a daily basis through discussion, at the beginning and end of each day. This ensures children's needs are effectively met, while providing continuity of care. The displays of children's work, and an album of photographs of children occupied in many activities, help parents clearly see how their children happily spend their days.

A good selection of resources help children begin to learn about diversity. For example, they saw the small world figures on crutches, in a wheelchair, and wearing glasses, and they began to notice that 'real' people sometimes have them too. They celebrate many festivals and dress up in a variety of costumes, which along with the childminder's positive attitude, helps children gain a view of the wider world.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a very experienced childminder with a sound knowledge of how young children develop and learn. She understands how to meet their individual needs, and regularly works with another childminder, providing many opportunities for one to one care, and a wider range of experiences suited to individual children's stage of development. The children are closely supervised, and receive high levels of support as they play in the child oriented environment.

The childminder is well organised, and has all the regulatory documentation in place, which is well maintained to ensure children continue to receive appropriate care, and their continued safety and welfare is supported. The childminder clearly displays her certificate of registration, and accurately records the children's daily attendance to show when she is childminding. 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 all existing injuries are recorded and to ensure all records of accidents, incidents and medication are recorded individually.

Each child now has individual records for recording incidents, accidents and medication.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints log 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 the correct fitting of the fire blanket and smoke detector
- ensure checks are complete for all household members over the age of 16 years

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk