

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY266576
Inspection date	17/03/2008
Inspector	Michael Collins

Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Childminding

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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 provider must give a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must give a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Day Care and Childminding (inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 No 2300 Regulations 5 and 6).

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Childminder has been registered since 2003. She lives with her five adult and school aged children. They live in a four bed roomed house in Callington, Cornwall. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, in addition to the upstairs bathroom and a bedroom for naps. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There are currently six children from two-years-old to 10-years-old on roll with one child receiving funding for Nursery Education. The childminder walks or drives to the local school to take and collect children. She takes children to the local library, local park and swimming pool. The childminder is a member of the Cornwall Childminding Association and has completed their quality assurance scheme for network childminders, Children Come First. She has also has completed an NVQ Level 2 qualification in Early Years and is currently studying for a level three qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The childminder supports the children's good health by planning and organising a good variety of activities which contribute to their physical development. With appropriate supervision, the children use a variety of large and small play equipment, ranging from ride on toys and walkers, to slides and a ball pond. The childminder is aware of the children's ages and stage of development and is able to support their growing co-ordination and physical skills.

Through good cleaning and hygiene routines the childminder further protects and promotes the children's good health, ensuring that they are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Through the routine, established in partnership with parents, and the appropriate interaction from the childminder, children learn the importance of good hygiene. To further support this, and to give each child a sense of belonging, each child has their own hand towel. Her consistent and appropriate approach to nappy changing, personal care and hygiene minimise the risks of cross-contamination and infection. These combined approaches help her to support and develop children's growing understanding of personal care. The childminder maintains good medical records and paperwork, and acts in the best interests of children to keep them healthy or should they be unwell.

The childminder provides snacks that appeal to children and meet their dietary needs. Food provided by parents is stored safely and provided to children at agreed times in their established routines. To further support her ability to ensure safe and healthy foods the childminder has attended local authority training for food safety and has implemented a system of regular checks on the temperature of cold storage. She takes into account parental wishes, for example, by providing fresh fruit, or by

avoiding certain foods because of allergies or diet. Drinks, chosen by the parents, of milk, water or juice are always available to them in their own container, in order to maintain their fluid levels and minimise cross-infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a well maintained and child-friendly home. A written risk assessment identifies and minimises the majority of hazards. This enables children to explore their environment with growing independence and safety. However, whilst electrical sockets in the walls have safety covers extension leads do not and this places children at risk. The childminder is committed to the constant supervision of children and is skilled at gently re-directing or distracting them.

A good range of resources, which meet safety standards, are easily accessible to the children, who confidently make their own selection during their free-play. The childminder ensures children use resources with safety and purpose and consistently reminds them of their own and other's safety. To further support the children's growing understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe the childminder holds regular fire drills with the children.

A selection of written policies and procedures, which includes all required documentation, promotes and safeguards the welfare of children. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and now has a good knowledge of child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to arrive at the childminder's home and they are pleased and eager to take part in the good variety of practical activities prepared for them. The childminder's sensitivity towards children's individuality and need ensures that all children are skilfully settled and happy to remain and participate. However, planning for children under three years is not currently undertaken and this leads to some activities not being fully adjusted for them.

Children make their own choices and they are absorbed and happy in their play. The consistent and genuinely warm and caring relationships established with the children by the childminder fosters the children's trust and sense of well being. These good relationships result in good adult-child interactions and this supports the development of early communication skills. The relaxed and child-friendly environment, created by the childminder, ensures children are able to be confident and make their own choices; it also encourages them to be independent learners and allows their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness to shine through.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The childminder has a clear and sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and skilfully promotes children's learning, through very effective questioning and discussion. She plans a good variety of activities, which cover all areas of learning and offers children a very good range of indoor and outdoor experiences. However, planning does not show how activities will be extended for the less or more able child. The childminder understands the practical uses of the Foundation Stage curriculum and is using her observation and assessment records to identify the next step for individual children.

Children enjoy and choose from a good selection of appropriate resources and activities. They have the confidence and abilities to initiate their own play and do so with ease. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a wide range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, they make junk models, they visit local playgroups, they enjoy regular swimming trips, and explore cultures other than their own through projects and activities.

Children are confident, independent learners, who develop very good concentration skills as they engage in a good balance of free play and adult led activities. They learn to recognise their names and those of their friends through use of large print laminated cards. All children use mark making to represent their ideas and either label their artwork with their own name, or are assisted to do so by the childminder. Children also make marks and write for a range of different purposes, such as when role playing.

Through use of planned activities and by taking opportunities that arise during day to day activities the childminder extends children's mathematical vocabulary and skills. Children use these skills with purpose in their play by counting objects, sharing resources equally and calculating how many pieces of fruit are needed to ensure everyone gets the same at snack time. Children experience a range of technology equipment, such as computers, telephones and tills, and they develop a good sense of time as they talk with the childminder about events in their lives or the daily routine.

Children create freely, using paint and a wide variety of collage and model-making materials. They enjoy sensory play, using sand, water and dough and are particularly fond of painting and very proud to show off their hand prints on the wall or the pictures they made which are displayed prominently. Children are very imaginative and use a variety of resources to support their play, whether this is using dolls to play 'mummies and daddies' or the till to play 'shop'. They use a range of small equipment, such as scissors, pencils and brushes, and develop very good control of their large and small physical movements.

Children clearly enjoy being at the childminder's house, making themselves very much at home and eagerly taking part in the varied and stimulating activities provided for their learning and enjoyment. There is a consistently warm and caring atmosphere and the children feel genuinely valued. They are able to talk clearly and

discuss real and imaginary events. They initiate their own play and develop this to include ideas and subjects they have learned about.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Both children and parents are warmly welcomed by the childminder to her home, with parents describing it as 'a home from home'. She gathers all the information she requires to make sure that parental wishes, individual need, and family background are considered and acted upon. She has improved the provision of resources and activities which promote a positive view of the wider world and ensures that her plans now reflect this. For example, there is a good selection of books, posters and other resources which reflect positive images and she discusses and celebrates difference with children at appropriate points. Also, in order to further support this aspect she uses other local amenities such as play and toddler groups.

Children respond very well to the clear routines, appropriate boundaries and high expectations of the childminder. She has developed genuinely warm and caring relationships with the children. She treats all children as individuals and they are respected and individually valued by her. She makes sure that they are supported and encouraged to interact co-operatively and so develop their social and wider skills. To further develop and support these skills the childminder works in partnership with parents to develop joint strategies and individual routines. Through her consistent and positive reinforcement of good behaviour and the good partnership work with parents, the children's understanding of right and wrong increases, they feel safe and secure and, as a result, their behaviour is excellent. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Contracts are in place for all children detailing the service provided and these are regularly updated. The childminder provides a 'parent folder' which details all of her policies and procedures, and parents have open access to this. She provides daily verbal information to parents about their children's activities and events. If children are in receipt of funding for nursery education she shares her observation and assessment records with their parents and uses these to plan the next step for individuals. She has produced very good parent questionnaires about her service, and these are positive in all areas relevant to the inspection. This combined and positive approach to communication and partnership with parents ensures they are aware of their children's progress, activities and events and are able to discuss this with both the childminder and their children. This in turn benefits their ability to support their children's care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management for Nursery Education is good. The childminder plans and organises her time and environment very well. She has a

mainly good understanding of her strengths and weaknesses and is working closely with the network co-ordinator to sustain and improve these. By providing a welcoming and well organised setting the childminder ensures that parents and children feel welcome, comfortable and safe. She makes sure that children have appropriate choices and she supports their confidence to rest or play, as both they and their parents would wish.

By consistently and effectively implementing her good policies and procedures, and through close partnership work with parents, the childminder positively promotes the welfare, care and development of the children in her care. However, by failing to notify the regulator of significant events such as changes in the composition of the household, or the attainment of accreditation, the childminder is in breach of the regulations, and this has had a negative impact on the overall judgement for care.

The childminder maintains all of the required documentation very well, and parents are able to access information about her service, or their children, in well organised and neatly presented folders. To ensure that parents are kept informed of their children's attainment and progress, the childminder provides regular verbal reports and maintains good two way communication with them. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The childminder has improved the service she provides by completing the three recommendations made at the last inspection for National Standard 6: Safety and for National Standard 9: Equal opportunities.

She has achieved this by improving her ability to help children stay safe by ensuring that smoke alarms are maintained in working order and by improving her understanding and knowledge of child protection issues. She has also improved her ability to support children in making a positive contribution by increasing the range of resources and activities which promote a positive view of the wider world.

Complaints about the childcare provision

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

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop planning for children under three years by using a framework such as Birth to three matters
- ensure children are unable to access electrical sockets, in particular extension leads
- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters.

The quality and standards of nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that planning for Nursery Education clearly shows how activities will be extended for the less or more able child.

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 2473) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk