

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	149112
Inspection date	12/01/2009
Inspector	Jane Mount
Type of setting	Childminder

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and three children who are aged ten years, twelve years and fourteen years. The property is situated in Woodhall Farm, on the outskirts of Hemel Hempstead and is within easy walking distance of shops, schools and a park. All areas of the premises are included in the registration although the ground floor is mainly used for childminding purposes. There are toilet facilities on the ground floor and a fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play. Appropriate sleep facilities are available on the first floor for younger children needing a sleep during the day. Access to the property is via a small step and the family has a cat and a rabbit.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Overnight care is not provided. Registration is for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time including three under five years. The childminder is currently caring for three children in the early years age range and two older children. Children currently attend on a full time basis, before and after school and during the school holidays. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and a member of a local childminding group.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The childminder provides a high quality service which enables children to flourish in a child-centred environment. They are making excellent progress in their learning and development as the childminder tailors activities to the individual child. Children's welfare is fully promoted and they feel very much at home in the childminder's care. Highly effective partnerships with parents, carers and others contribute positively to the childminder's knowledge of children's individual needs. She has a very positive attitude to improvement through extensive training and has procedures in place for monitoring the quality of her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- use the Ofsted self-evaluation form and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing internal review.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is committed to fully implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). She has worked hard to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the framework and this is reflected in her outstanding practice. Professional development takes high priority and is a key strength of the setting.

On-going training effectively consolidates the childminder's knowledge and understanding of children's care, learning and development requirements. For example, the childminder is very near to completing an NVQ level three childcare qualification and she has undertaken extensive and varied training to further develop her childcare practice. The childminder strives for continued improvement and areas highlighted for further development at the last inspection have all been successfully addressed to further improve outcomes for children. The childminder is fully aware of her key strengths and has developed many procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of her practice. For example, she seeks feedback from parents through the use of parent questionnaires. Other systems of self-evaluation are under development to ensure continuous improvement.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively to protect children and promote their well-being. All documentation is robust, well-presented and effectively shared with parents. The childminder shows a strong commitment to inclusive practice and takes great care to find out about and to meet the needs of each child in her care. Well established relationships with parents and carers ensure children's care and learning needs are fully supported. Parents receive a wealth of information about the childminder's service. For example, a colour brochure, a welcome letter and parent packs, a portfolio and regular newsletters are some of the ways the childminder ensures parents are fully informed about the setting. Daily diaries are used to share information with parents about younger children and daily verbal communication between the childminder and parents ensures they receive continuity in their care. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress and achievements and are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning. For example, the childminder ensures parents are aware of planned activities, topics and themes their children are going to be involved in. Effective partnerships are in place with other early years settings such as the local school and toddler and activity groups that they regularly attend. This enables the childminder to complement the EYFS as she is able to continue a topic or theme carried out at other settings within her home.

The environment is well-organised, safe and supportive. The childminder successfully organises her time and resources to ensure children's needs are consistently met. She actively welcomes the children in her care and their parents into her home and works hard to provide an inclusive environment. Children's safety is paramount and children are closely supervised by the childminder. Some highly effective measures are taken to minimise hazards and to keep children safe including rigorous risk assessments. The childminder has an excellent understanding and genuine commitment to safeguard children. She has attended safeguarding training and fully understands her role and responsibilities if she did have a concern. Child protection guidance leaflets are readily available alongside an informative safeguarding children policy and these are fully shared with parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning and development is positively promoted through the childminder's excellent knowledge of child development and of the EYFS

framework. She confidently uses the framework to plan a broad and varied range of activities and play experiences which cover the six areas of learning and are effectively adapted to meet the needs of individual children to positively support their learning. Highly effective observation and assessment systems ensure the childminder is fully aware of children's developmental stages and she uses this information when planning their next steps. Consequently, all children's learning needs are catered for and children are making excellent progress in their learning. Children have a positive attitude to learning because of the excellent guidance and support given by the childminder. Children play a dynamic role in their learning as they offer their own ideas and respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. Adult-led and child-initiated activities are well-balanced and encourage children to be active learners. Children are making excellent progress in their learning and personal development because of the strong relationships between the childminder, children and parents. The childminder understands that every child is unique and because of highly effective communication with parents she has an accurate understanding of children's individual needs, their personalities and learning preferences and she meets these needs extremely well.

The environment is well-organised and children are able to freely access toys which help them to make choices and develop their independence skills. All children are included as successfully pitched activities ensure they receive the space to work at their own pace. The childminder's meticulous planning ensures that all children enjoy an extensive variety of play experiences and opportunities which covers the six areas of learning. Also, regular visits to toddler groups enhances children's opportunities to develop social skills and further promotes their learning. For example, during a topic about the jobs people do the children were very excited when the police and firemen visited the local toddler group and they enthusiastically recall climbing on the fire engine. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult-child interactions. The childminder is skilled at extending children's language, listening and talking with them. Children delight in looking at books with the childminder and are totally absorbed in the story telling. Everyday routines are skilfully used to their full potential to encourage and promote children's numeracy skills such as counting how many bricks there are when tidying up or counting the cars when out walking. Children have extensive opportunities to express themselves creatively and have opportunities to use a varied range of mediums including sand, water and paint. Older children delight in cutting and sticking and using their imagination making models while younger children enjoy the sensory experiences of playdough or paint. The childminder actively promotes a positive awareness of diversity. For example, children enthusiastically participate in planned outings such as a visit to a local mosque and to a cathedral. Children's physical development is actively promoted. Children eagerly participate in running races and learn about how their heart beats faster and the muscles in their legs get stronger. Children learn that exercise can be fun and indoor and outdoor environments are used to their full potential.

Children's health is fully protected as excellent hygiene practices are consistently applied. Children are well nourished with a balanced and nutritious range of food choices provided. Children have regular opportunities to learn about healthy eating and particularly enjoy making fruit cocktails or kebabs and healthy pizzas. Highly

effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety is fully protected and they develop a secure knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, clear emergency evacuation procedures are in place which are regularly practised with children. This includes practising different scenarios to ensure children are fully aware of how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's behaviour is managed well due to the childminder's consistent approach in promoting positive behaviour. Consistent praise and encouragement ensure that children develop high levels of self-esteem. Children are respected and highly valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect differences and to successfully manage their own behaviour. For example, they discuss the impact negative behaviour can have on others. Children are encouraged to share and to take turns and are beginning to understand responsible behaviour. For example, older children spontaneously help younger children in their play.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
---	-----

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
--	-----

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

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 record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.