

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	149225
Inspection date	23/04/2009
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
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 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 was registered in April 2004. She lives with her family; two young adults aged 17 and 20 years in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The areas of the home used for childminding are the whole ground floor and specified rooms on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via two steps to the main door or one step to the rear door.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to provide five places for children. There are currently five children attending, two of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Two children attend other settings such as a nursery or a local pre-school. The childminder is able to provide care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Very good knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that the childminder promotes learning with success. Children are safe and have their welfare promoted well whilst arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Informal methods of working with parents are well-established defining a good working relationship. Partnerships with other settings providing EYFS are secure and enable children to benefit from consistent care. The childminder has established procedures for self-evaluation that enable her to recognise her strengths and areas for development and implement change for improved outcomes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- inform the planning building from an initial starting point that involves parental input and use the assessments to show progression
- develop the educational programme, with reference to supporting children's knowledge and understanding of the world, with particular reference to culture, religion and disability.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare of children. The childminder has a firm understanding of issues relating to safeguarding. She extends her knowledge by attending training such as safeguarding and is completing an NVQ Level 3; this promotes her continued development. The

childminder works closely with parents identifying specific needs such as a medical dietary need or a cultural preference for diet early in the arrangement to ensure that children receive appropriate support. The partnership with other settings is established and the childminder ensures that she is aware of topic works to enable complimentary care to be provided.

The childminder completes self-evaluation to assist her work, producing a personal development plan with specific targets for action. This ensures positive outcomes for children. Risk assessment is completed both for the home and for outings to minimise risk. An additional safety precaution is the carrying of cards for each child showing a photograph, contact details and any medical requirements. This enables prompt action to be taken by the emergency services in the event of an accident.

Resources are organised within accessible crates to enable children to self-select materials and initiate play. Flexible routines encourage children to enjoy a range of activities within the home and exploration of the local community fosters an awareness of the immediate world around them. They visit Standalone Farm viewing the lambs and other animals, Watton-at-Stone garden centre to purchase seeds and bulbs, and use activity groups such as Tumble Tots. Verbal feedback to parents is used very effectively with a diary to support this for babies or as parents request. The childminder carries out observations linking these to EYFS and identifies next steps. However, there is no process to agree a baseline starting point for children or methods to show progression involving parental input. This means that parents are not fully involved in their children's learning, and that potential learning opportunities may be missed.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that support them in making good progress. Planning is flexible and is based around themed activities that are drawn from current interests or events to support children's all-round development. For example, following a family holiday, children become interested in transport and links farms. This leads to a transport theme with children interested in any vehicle they see in the town, reading books such as 'Maisies Bus', and a trip to the farm to see the newborn lambs. Children are extremely interested in books and reading using regular story time at the library as well as having access to a broad range of reading books. They show great care for reading materials, turn pages with care and follow stories avidly.

Observation is completed using photographs of activities, narrative observations, samples of work and evaluations of completed activities. Next steps are identified within each area of learning for each topic for each child. However, with no system to show progression, children may not be fully supported to reach their full potential. Children talk easily with the childminder and visitors, exploring their developing language. They count readily within activities, explore size and texture with dough, and engage for extended periods in creative works such as making Easter bonnets and masks.

Children show curiosity in the natural world around them, technology, and each

other. For instance, they enjoy planting seeds and bulbs, preparing the ground for planting and tending to plants as they grow. They learn about growth, linking both changes to their own heights with measuring the growing plants. Children competently use computers seeking appropriate children's programmes through the Internet and use cameras to take photographs, later viewing them through the television. Children learn to appreciate each others cultures and home languages asking questions and showing an interest in the differences between languages. They use world maps and identify flags, beginning to learn about the wider world. However, they have limited opportunities to have first hand experiences of culture, religion or disability to extend their appreciation of the wider world.

Children thrive because they are in a secure environment. They take part in routines that promote their safety such as fire evacuation each month. They learn about road safety when walking each day and have a firm understanding of safety in the car as they abide by rules such as not removing their seat belt until fully stopped and never opening the car doors. Children are developing an appreciation of others and take part in events such as Red Nose Day for Comic Relief discussing fundraising and empathy for others. Children have opportunities to shop and choose foods learning to make considered choices about foods that promote their health and well-being. They have ample opportunities to explore their physical capabilities as they use parks, the garden, tumble tots and social groups each week.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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