

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	149347
Inspection date	29/09/2009
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
Type of setting	Childminder

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in June 1998. She lives with her husband and children aged 18, 17, 15, 13 and ten years in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via a slope with a single step.

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 care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. There are currently four children attending part-time hours, three of whom are within the early years age range. The childminder takes children to and collects from other settings such as the early years unit of the local primary school or the local pre-school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's individuality is recognised by the childminder who has a sound understanding of their individual needs and interests. She creates a positive relationship with parents and carers, offering information about the provision and remaining flexible to family needs. This ensures that children's needs are met and that most activities are planned to successfully promote sound progress in their learning, although assessment is yet to be used to fully feed the planning, involve parents or chart progression. The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's welfare through established daily routines, a clear understanding of safeguarding and broad risk assessments, however risk assessment fails to record every type of outing which presents a potential risk. She has a positive approach towards continued development, seeking verbal feedback from parents and planning ongoing training but this is yet to be fully developed to enable reflection on the overall care and continued development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the opportunities for children to gain an increased knowledge of other cultures and beliefs, special educational needs and disabilities
- develop the assessment procedures to identify an initial starting point for children that involves parental input, use the assessments made to show progression and ensure that identified next steps are seen to inform the planning for individual children
- update the record of risk assessments to include an assessment of risks for

- all outings and trips
- use self-evaluation and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing internal review.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has sound knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). She has an understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding children, maintaining a clear procedure shared with parents and seeking continued training. Practical assessments to minimise risks to children in the home, and for a selection of outings, help to keep children safe however, there is not a record for all types of outings undertaken which means there is potential for safety to be compromised. Children are kept safe and learn from clear routines for personal safety such as encouragement to be aware of road safety each day, house rules for safety when playing, and attention to safety when using community facilities. Procedures for illness and the administration of medication are clear and understood by all parties due to the shared policies. This is enhanced by the agreed emergency carer known to parents and carers.

The childminder offers an inclusive service for all children in her care ensuring that she is aware of their individual learning styles and is using this in her general planning for the day thereby narrowing the achievement gap. This is shown when discussing how children adapt to the new childminding situation, the amount of support they require and how each child's needs are incorporated into the daily practice. The childminder has some understanding of cultural differences and the impact of inequality and has some provision to support children's awareness of the wider community, although there is limited planning to fully develop children's awareness and knowledge of other cultures and beliefs, special educational needs and disabilities through everyday activities. The childminder understands the need to work with other agencies to support children's all-round development. The relationship with parents and carers is effective offering very flexible care hours as demanded by working patterns. Parents are not yet involved however, with establishing a baseline starting point for children's development or involvement within ongoing planning for their child.

The childminder demonstrates that she is committed to continued development, having made recent improvements such as implementation of an assessment system, the review of care for recently contracted families, and the attendance at training for 'Working in Partnership through Early Support'. She seeks feedback from parents offering verbal, telephone or text contact. These steps are likely to bring about some continued improvement to the provision. However, self-evaluation processes do not form the basis of internal review to focus on strengths or areas for development to bring about improved outcomes for children. Children achieve and make sound progress in their learning because they have free access to an environment where they may explore, self-select materials and initiate learning. Younger children are encouraged to make choices to develop their self-

esteem and confidence. Local community resources such as parks and the library provide an extended range of opportunities for children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are confident and enjoy their time spent with the childminder. They make steady progress in their learning because the childminder is competent in supporting their learning. She naturally challenges children as they play, bringing their attention to matching by size, shape and colour, and supporting their emerging language. She shows them that they are valued by listening to them closely and helping them to learn about cooperative play and having empathy for each other. Younger children enjoy eye contact and close attention trying their developing physical skills, babbling and vocalising, showing exploration of communication with both the childminder and other children. The childminder makes some observation of children, using broad summary observations and linking these to next steps but there is currently no baseline starting point established to enable children to be challenged to reach their full potential and no system to show how observation tracks progression or uses next steps to direct the planning for individual children.

The childminder is mindful of her role in ensuring safety and helps young children to understand personal safety. For instance, by using emergency evacuation routines, by using safety wrist straps when away from the home, and by introducing them to an awareness of strangers. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They are confident and secure and, therefore, actively involved in their learning. They settle to sleep easily during daily routines, waking happily, showing a sense of contentment within the care of the childminder. Children explore creativity through role play such as with medical kits or with tool kits enabling them to re-enact what they see around them. They explore mechanical and battery-operated materials including cars and trucks as well as the role play oven, beginning to learn about basic technology in everyday life. Some remote control vehicles are available, helping children to learn about direction and controlling items to assist them in pre-computer skills. Children thoroughly enjoy music and singing attending a music and social group in the community. They spontaneously sing songs such as 'row, row, row the boat' when playing with the rocking horse, taking turns to use it and enjoying sitting on it together with help from the childminder. They are learning social skills that will help them in their future lives within social and learning situations.

Good use is made of outdoor areas away from the home such as the parks and local lakeland areas each day, offering an extended range of physical opportunities. They enjoy taking balls and bikes to the park and exploring large open spaces together, extending their physical health. Other areas visited include the zoo or farms where children experience animals which they would otherwise not encounter learning about the world around them. They begin to develop an awareness of healthy eating, enjoying meals prepared by the childminder and choosing fruits, such as apples, for snacks. They develop understanding of personal hygiene through established daily routines.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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
--	-----