

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219724
Inspection date	25/03/2010
Inspector	Clare Elizabeth Pook
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 0300 123 1231, 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: 0300 123 1231
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 1989. She lives with her husband and two grown up children. They live in a village, near Sandy, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. A bedroom upstairs is used for minded children to sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access into and out of the childminder's home is at ground level.

This provision is registered by Ofsted 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. She is currently minding four children in the early years age range. She also offers care to two children aged over five years. The childminder is also registered for overnight care. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, shops and parks. The family has a dog and a hamster.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and regularly attends local toddler groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and effectively promotes inclusive practice ensuring that children's individual needs are thoroughly met. The childminder provides exciting and stimulating activities based upon children's interests and starting points, as a result children are making good progress in their learning and development. Close working relationships with parents and good communication with other agencies ensures children are very well supported.

The childminder maintains all documents to a good standard ensuring children's welfare and safety is promoted well. The childminder is committed to maintaining continuous improvement by successfully addressing previous recommendations, keeping up to date with training and developing her systems of evaluating, so that she can improve both outcomes for children as well as her own professional skills.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a system of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children
- develop systems to use the information and observations provided from parents to contribute effectively towards children's assessment records systems.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is effective in safeguarding children, because her risk assessments are robust ensuring hazards to children, both in her home and on outings, are minimised. For example, sharp knives are kept in high cupboards and the garden is checked each day for animal faeces. All members of the household have had the appropriate checks carried out ensuring they are suitable. She has a secure knowledge and understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, enabling her to act on any concerns she may have for children, thus protecting them. The childminder's policies and procedures for safeguarding children are effective and are shared with parents, so they have a clear understanding of how the childminder operates. These together with the activities such as teaching children about road safety and dangers of strangers, keep and help children to feel safe.

The childminder has attended training on how to evaluate her practice. Although she is able to identify some areas for improvements and recognise her own strengths, such as partnership working, she has not yet put an effective system in place to evaluate her practice and use as a working tool. Recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been addressed effectively. For example, prior written consent is now obtained from parents before administering medication, which safeguards children's health and well-being and the fire blanket has been wall mounted to ensure that it is accessible and useable in the event of a small fire.

The childminder organises her time with the children very well. Children have good opportunities throughout the day to access the garden, go for a walk or play in the park, as well as engage in both child-initiated and adult-led activities. The childminder organises her play space effectively allowing children to move about freely and independently access resources from low-level storage. Through discussions about materials that can be recycled and activities using old packaging to make models, children learn about the environment and recycling. The children remind the childminder to wash out the dog food cans and milk cartons and explain that a different dust cart is used to collect these. Photographs displayed promote children's self-esteem and form discussion points about the activities they have enjoyed. Posters are displayed at children's eye level showing a range of cultures, abilities and other languages. These help children to recognise and value difference within society.

The childminder has established very good relationships with parents. They work well in partnership together seeking solutions to issues such as behaviour strategies. Where necessary they involve other agencies such as the health visitor for guidance and support. The childminder provides parents with a wealth of information about the service she provides and in return gains lots of information about the children from the parents. Children's daily routines and their learning and development needs are discussed giving the childminder a sound foundation on which to base children's individual learning plans. The childminder shares these

children's records with the parents. Although the parents and childminder discuss what the children enjoy at home, the childminder does not always use the observations and assessments from parents effectively to inform plans or next steps.

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

Policies and procedures are effective and reflect practice well. Accident and medication records are now accurately maintained, giving parents a clear picture of any action taken. The childminder holds a current first aid certificate and is confident in dealing with emergency situations. She ensures she has contact details and a small first aid kit with her on outings. Children take part in regular emergency evacuation procedures so they are aware of what to do in an emergency. All these help children to be and feel safe, as well as contributing positively towards their care and welfare.

The childminder interacts very well with children and it is evident that strong bonds are being formed. Young children seek out hugs and smiles as they play, returning happily to the garage to whiz cars down the ramp. The childminder's secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage enables her to be spontaneous and flexible in her approach. She lets the children take the lead in initiating play and uses her skill to challenge and enhance this. For example, a child is excited and proud that they can see their reflection in the glass oven door, so the childminder seeks out other opportunities for the child to see their reflection. Constant conversations, repetition of sounds and words encourages the young children to talk. For example, using animal noises 'the dogs says woof'.

The childminder keeps records of the children's achievements in a diary. Each day she jots down observations and links these to the early learning goals. Sometimes these are supported with photographs which capture the achievement or expression of the child. A spider plan at the beginning of the diary shows the six areas of learning and the next steps planned within each area. Although the plans are focused and the knowledge of what the children enjoy helps the childminder to plan, they do not often include observations from home that parents have noted or mentioned. Without these the childminder does not have a full picture of what the children can do.

The childminder is skilled in adapting activities to meet the needs and different stages of development of the children she minds. For example, making Easter and spring pictures using different skills and craft resources. The children enjoy retelling and making up stories pretending to read to each other and the childminder, which the childminder praises them for. Children learn to solve problems by completing puzzles and working out which piece fits where. They learn to use mathematical language in their play such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', when balancing beakers on top of each other. Simple technology is explored when using the computer to explore child appropriate websites. These all help children to learn skills for the future.

Children are learning to adopt healthy lifestyles. The childminder provides them with healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit and they discuss the importance of having 'five a day'. They gain fresh air each day through walking to and from school or playing outside. Younger children attend local toddler groups where they are encouraged to stretch and move their bodies in different ways. Posters displayed in the bathroom remind children about hand washing and paper towels are used to prevent the spread of infection. These help children to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene. The childminder has a clear understanding about behaviour management and is a good role model for young children, she is very positive and frequently uses praise and encouragement to reward good behaviour and effort. She works closely with parents on this and where necessary visits the children's home to support parents and ensure continuity. This contributes well towards children's levels of self-esteem and confidence.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

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
--	-----