

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	251114
Inspection date	27/01/2010
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
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 1986. She lives with her husband in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and a secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The childminder has two dogs and a rabbit as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding nine children in this age group, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. When working together, they may care for a maximum of five children in the early years age range. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years: this provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder escorts children to and from the local primary school and takes them to a toddler group regularly. She is a member of an approved childminding network and currently receives early education funding for three and four-year-olds. The childminder holds a relevant early years qualification to Level 4 and is currently working towards a further qualification. The provision has achieved accreditation through the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are animated, confident and inspired to learn as they explore the rich and stimulating environment of the childminder's home. The childminder has expert knowledge of each child's individual needs and interests, enabling her to promote all aspects of their welfare, learning and development with great success. She is genuinely committed to working in partnership with parents, carers and outside professionals to ensure children's experiences are supported consistently across different settings. There are robust systems in place to fully evaluate the provision, ensuring the childminder maintains constant momentum towards making ongoing improvements to the existing high quality 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:

- using a wider range of quality improvement tools to extend the self-evaluation processes further and build on existing provision for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder successfully creates an environment in which children are fully protected from abuse and neglect. She has continued to prioritise training in relation to safeguarding issues and has developed an effective safeguarding children policy. This ensures the childminder has all the information she needs to protect children from any potential harm. All the required checks are completed to ensure children are cared for by suitable adults and a secure record is kept of any visitors. An extensive range of written policies and procedures, which are above and beyond requirements, guide the organisation of the daily routine and ensure that children are kept extremely safe and secure. For example, the childminder diligently carries out robust daily risk assessments to ensure children's safety in all areas of the home and garden, and during outings. Children are offered a vibrant child friendly environment, with space to explore and spread out as they play with a stimulating range of resources. These resources are set out extremely well, most being labelled with photographs and stored in low-level boxes to fully promote children's self selection and free choice.

The childminder truly values and promotes the involvement of parents and carers in children's care, learning and development. She successfully fosters a very welcoming and caring approach which ensures parents are totally comfortable in discussing information about their children's needs. Parents speak highly of the progress their children make at the setting and feel very well informed via daily diaries, displays of photographs, newsletters and regular access to the informative 'learning journey' records. Parents are very keen to add their own comments to their children's records and have welcomed the opportunity to fill in ongoing 'wow notes' to further celebrate children's achievements at home. The childminder has established a strong professional relationship with the early years teacher at the local primary school, helping her to build up a clear picture of children's learning and development whilst at school. Equality of opportunity is fully promoted to ensure each child is supported to participate in all aspects of the provision and achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. A wide range of resources that are representative of diversity, such as books, small world characters and puzzles, are fully integrated into the daily provision to help children to develop a positive awareness of the wider world. For example, children share a book about children who live in a trailer, and a persona doll is sensitively introduced to the children to inspire discussion about life as a Traveller.

Children are cared for by a highly dedicated childminder who has continuously accessed a wide range of relevant training courses to ensure she has extensive knowledge and understanding to compliment her role. For example, she has attended various training workshops to enable her to embrace the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and continues to dedicate time outside her childminding hours to complete a relevant Foundation Degree course. The childminder has high aspirations for the quality of the service provided at her setting and conscientiously reflects on her practice. She uses the Ofsted self-evaluation form as a tool for setting ambitious targets for improvement and reviewing feedback received from the questionnaires issued to parents, children

and outside professionals. All responses are extremely positive and praise the high standard of care and education that children experience.

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

Children flourish in all areas of their learning and development as the knowledgeable childminder has excellent understanding of how children learn and develop through play. They form strong friendships with each other and therefore feel very settled and reassured in their surroundings. Babies respond well to the childminder's attentive nature, giggling to express their enjoyment whilst she sings rhymes to them. The layout of the space is completely child-friendly with well-defined areas such as comfortable child-sized furniture where children can sit to enjoy meals and craft activities together, and a spacious area in the centre of the playroom to accommodate children's small world play. Access to the garden is well promoted, where children enjoy a wide range of activities covering all aspects of their development. For example, they relish the opportunity to use different tools for digging and planting flowers, and master their physical skills on the climbing apparatus and enclosed trampoline. Children remain fully engaged and interested throughout the session as the childminder asks appropriate questions to inspire them to discuss their thought processes and ideas. For example, she promotes children's numeric understanding by asking them to count how many sea creatures are in the box and prompting them to estimate who has caught the most fish using the magnetic rods. Children spontaneously practise these skills for themselves as they count the bricks in the towers they build and interact with the colourful numbers featured in displays around the playroom.

Children are developing strong skills in communication, language and literacy as they eagerly share the extensive range of books with the childminder. She encourages younger children to describe what they can see in the pictures and offers them meaningful opportunities to bring the main characters in the story to life. For example, after choosing their favourite dinosaur book, children delight in emphasising the movements and size of the different dinosaurs using various arm actions. The childminder encourages children to describe these actions using language such as 'fast', 'slow', 'tall' and 'short'. Babies are intrigued by the events and actions that occur around them. For example, they gaze intently and reach out for things that catch their interest, such as the crunching sound of the plastic packaging. Children look forward to visiting various groups and places of interest in the local community, which brings variety to their experiences. Visits to the local toddler group are particularly popular, providing chances for children to develop their social skills alongside others and encounter a wider range of additional resources.

The childminder is very skilled in using observations and assessments to systematically track children's progress towards the early learning goals. Extensive 'learning journey' records include meaningful photographs of the children participating in a wide range of learning opportunities and detailed observations which are expertly linked to the EYFS areas of learning.

Outcomes for children's health are promoted extremely well, with rich opportunities for children to learn positive personal hygiene habits from a young age. For example, the childminder takes time to show younger children how to wipe their noses with a tissue, and sings a jolly song to make hand washing routines fun yet effective. Children reflect on the very healthy diets they consume as they are invited to add pictures of fruits and vegetables to the 'look what we have eaten' display. Regular practises of the emergency evacuation procedure help children to purposefully learn how to keep themselves safe and they enjoy informative visits to a local fire station.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
--	-----