

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	301156
Inspection date	19/03/2009
Inspector	Carol Ann Dixon
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 was registered in 1992. She lives with her husband and adult son in the Greenfield area of Saddleworth. Minded children have the use of a large lounge/dining room and are able to use the secure outside courtyard which is accessed through the kitchen area. A small bedroom on the middle floor is available for sleep periods. Bathroom facilities are also available on this floor. The property is within walking distance of local schools and amenities. The childminder attends local toddler groups and regularly visits parks and the library.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is currently minding four children in the early years age range.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children flourish in an excellent environment where their welfare, learning and development are promoted exceptionally well. The childminder is dedicated and committed to meeting the unique needs of every child she cares for. Her effective self-evaluation systems enable her to identify and reduce barriers for participation of all children. Parents are fully informed about all aspects of the provision, and the childminder seeks the views of parents and children to help her develop the service she offers. She creates suitable partnerships with other settings children attend, to support consistent care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ways to further develop opportunities for children's ideas to influence planning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a significant understanding of the learning and development requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's interests and abilities are fully considered and comprehensive progress records demonstrate how they are rapidly moving forward in their learning and development. The childminder's exceptional personalised planning ensures that each child is purposefully included in a range of stimulating activities which maximise their learning potential. Partnership with parents is exemplary. Parents are fully informed about the care their children receive and the progress they make because

the childminder maintains and shares comprehensive written and photographic records with them. New parents receive a welcome pack containing copies of all policies and procedures, and all parents receive individual play plans for their children so they may support their child's learning at home.

The quality of the childminder's self-evaluation is excellent and demonstrates how she constantly assesses her own practice and strives for further improvement. The childminder actively invites the views and opinions of parents and children and is extremely responsive to suggestions received. For example, she has recently implemented an adverse weather policy so both the childminder and parents are better informed of the arrangements to be followed in such exceptional circumstances. Children's thoughts and ideas for outings and activities are also readily responded to although the childminder's planning records do not securely demonstrate this very good practice.

Recommendations made at the last inspection to review the storage arrangements for hazardous materials, to provide children with a sense of belonging in the setting and ensure all documentation is available for inspection have all been fully addressed which has had a positive impact on children's safety and security.

Children are fully safeguarded and protected from harm through the childminder's robust procedures and practices. Comprehensively detailed risk assessments on the premises, and also for outings, ensure that safety is continually monitored and reviewed. The childminder understands the signs and symptoms of abuse, she has attended updated training and has clear guidance in place to follow in the event of a concern. All the documentation required to support children's welfare is in place.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have a real sense of belonging in this child centred environment where they access an exceptionally wide range of attractive, age-appropriate play resources. Resources are stored accessibly and clearly labelled with text and pictures, which helps children understand that print carries meaning. Children know the childminder values their achievements because she displays photographs and examples of their work prominently. They have individual trays and coat hooks which all are able to recognise, as the childminder has thoughtfully labelled these with the children's name and photograph.

The childminder creates individual play plans for each child that build on the information she gathers from parents. The flexible plans reflect the interests and enthusiasms of the children attending and are very well adapted to allow all children to take part. The methods for observation, planning and assessment clearly show the skills children have acquired and the next steps planned in their learning. Children proudly share their own progress files with a sense of pride and ownership. Parents are actively involved in their children's progress through ongoing two-way communication, and by contributing to their child's 'Learning Journal'.

The childminder supports each child extremely well. For example, when offering a

choice of fruit at snack time, her skilful questioning and use of gestures successfully involves very young children in the daily routines and activities and promotes their early language development as they learn to listen, think and respond.

Toys, resources and experiences promote very positive images of diversity and meet the needs of all children. Visits to local groups and places of interest help children develop socially and learn about the wider world. This is extended through learning about other cultures and the way people live, which helps children develop a clear awareness of diversity. Children thrive on the praise and encouragement they receive and learn positive behaviour from the childminder's interactions with them. She has a clear policy concerning behaviour and strives to diffuse potential conflict skilfully, by taking the time to teach children how to share nicely and to understand the needs of others. The childminder displays a clear understanding of the differences between boys and girls learning styles and takes positive steps to ensure all children are able to fully participate in the full range of play experiences. For example, all children thoroughly enjoy mark making in the outdoor environment when they use real brushes and food colouring to paint the fence.

They develop their mathematical understanding through imaginative activities, such as using cardboard tubes to measure who is the tallest and then record their findings on a height chart. They learn about weight and size as they wash and weigh the apples they have picked. During wet weather they put on their splash suits and squirt washing up liquid into puddles. They have lots of fun observing what happens as they splash through the puddles to create bubbles.

Children benefit from meticulous hygiene routines and excellent procedures that help prevent the spread of infection. These include the use of individual towels and flannels and the childminder encouraging even the youngest child to wash their hands to learn good habits for the future, as she teaches them 'germs are not for sharing'. They also begin to learn about dental care as they brush their teeth. Children benefit from being provided with an appetising variety of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals which include a wide range of fresh fruits and vegetables.

They gain confidence as they persevere at acquiring everyday skills, such as putting on their own coats and shoes and regularly practise what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. Children learn about using equipment safely when using tools, such as trowels, as they plant spring bulbs outdoors and a real hammer as they knock nails into a tree stump, under the careful supervision of the childminder. Overall, the experiences provided help children make rapid progress and develop the skills necessary for their future learning.

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