

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	304003
Inspection date	26/06/2009
Inspector	Debra Elizabeth Jean Dahlstrom
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 registered in 1986. She lives with her husband and four children, adult sons and daughters both over eight years, in a detached house in the village of Rainow, several miles outside Macclesfield. The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time, of whom, no more than three may be in the early years age range. When working with an assistant she may care for a total of six children in the early years range.

There are currently eight children on roll in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 16 children aged over five years. The childminder is registered with Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The house is set in a rural location and is within walking distance of the local playgroup. Minded children have access to the playroom and dining area, including toilet and hand washing facilities, and to one bedroom for sleeping. There is also access to an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has a number of pets.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Each child is valued and fully included as all the welfare requirements are met successfully. Communication, between parents and other providers of the early years framework is effective, ensuring children's individual care and learning needs are met. Observations and assessments of children are periodically completed. The childminder demonstrates a commitment to improve and has identified key strengths and areas for future development as part of evaluating her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue with good practice in developing more systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Use these to identify learning priorities and plan motivating learning experiences for each child and match the observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is committed to providing high standards of care and education for children. She is very experienced and well organised and has made a number of improvements to her practice and the children's environment since her last inspection. The childminder identifies gaps in her knowledge and undertakes training to continually update the quality of her provision. For example, she attended a safeguarding course and training in EYFS and food hygiene. The maintenance of records, for safe and efficient management of the setting are in

place, such as risk assessments and attendance arrangements. A wide range of policies outlines effective practices. These are sensitively written and shared with parents taking into account the differing needs of children and their different stages of development. Additional links such as websites to provide further information from other agencies are included in the policies for parents.

Relationships with parents are warm, friendly and of long standing. They discuss individual starting points on entry to the setting as the childminder makes ongoing observations and assessments, although these generally tend to be completed on a monthly basis. Parents are happy with the quality of the childminder's provision and comment that they are very pleased with their child's progress. The childminder has well established informal systems to share information with other providers within the EYFS, such as the local pre-school. She uses their regular newsletters and discussions with the children's key worker, to inform her planning for the children in her care.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder is secure in her knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles of the Early Years framework. She successfully puts them into practice so helps children to fulfil their potential. Offering a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities the childminder ensures children learn to be both creative and critical thinkers. Activities are frequently adapted to ensure that every child is included. Children are valued as individuals in the childminder's care; she works closely with parents to follow the routines and cultural needs of all the children. Homemade meals and nutritious snacks help contribute to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

Children settle quickly as the childminder has a strong, genuine bond with all the children in her care. Children of all ages relish the time they spend with her and her family, as her approach is extremely warm and welcoming. Through her calm and patient manner, she strongly supports young children in making relationships with their peers. The childminder helps them to develop important social skills from a young age, such as turn taking and so helps them to understand and recognise the feelings of others.

The childminder is skilful in supporting children's early language, as she spends considerable time talking to them. She listens quietly to their early attempts at simple words and uses gestures and invitations for the child to 'show her' what they want to do. Children enjoy story sessions, as they can readily access their favourites from the bookcase or can choose from the large box of assorted crayons and pencils to make their marks on paper. The brightly newly decorated playroom provides an inviting area for children with some print on display and a photo board of 'who is here today'. This creates a sense of belonging for children as well as supporting their understanding of meaningful print, such as their name or those of their friends.

Children have many opportunities to express themselves creatively using a wide range of materials such as coloured rice, gloop, sand and water. Opportunities to

develop their physical skills are varied and include crawling through play tunnels or using fixed equipment for climbing. Children are fascinated as they blow bubbles or wave the different shaped 'bubble wands' and watch as they are carried off in the breeze. They construct a ramp using plastic piping for small cars to roll down thus developing balance, coordination and spatial awareness. All activities contribute successfully to the children's future economic well-being.

Children's learning and an understanding of their local community is well supported as the childminder takes an active role in many of the local events. Children, for example, help to construct a scarecrow for the annual village competition. A visit made by the fire service to the village, allowed children to take part in a supervised evacuation plan. Thus, they were able to practise skills in a way that promotes their interest.

The childminder makes good use of the outdoors to support children's learning and development. The construction of the decking area allows easy access to the garden for children all year round. The garden with its rural surroundings is home to wildlife such as birds and squirrels, as well two pet hens, which the children help to care for. The children are waiting with great excitement for imminent hatching of a brood of chicks. Growing of vegetables and flowers enable young children to appreciate the seasons and the importance of soil and water to make things grow. Links are made to children's own growth as they measure their height against their own charts.

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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