

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	308506
Inspection date	12/06/2009
Inspector	Judith, Mary Horsfall
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 was registered in 1996. She lives with her husband and three children aged 19, 15 and 11 years old. The home is situated close to the main road between Waterfoot and Bacup, Rossendale, Lancashire. The downstairs is used for childminding, plus upstairs bathroom and one bedroom. There are secure garden areas available for the children's use. The family have a pet hamster.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years old at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in the early years age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years old up to 11 years old. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes the children to toddler groups, nursery and school. Opening hours are 07.30 to 18.00, all year round. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and Sure Start Childminding Network. She holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 2 training in the relevant child care field.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are cared for in a welcoming, child-centred home, where there are some resources and activities which promote inclusive practice. A suitable range of age-appropriate toys and activities are on offer and children are happy and settled in the care of the childminder. Children are making adequate progress from their starting points through the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) because the childminder is implementing the requirements in an adequate manner. Systems for carrying out observations and assessments of children are in their infancy and the childminder demonstrates a reasonable capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- minimise hazards to children such as unlocked front door and access to bathroom toiletries/cleaning products
- devise and implement systems to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing relevant information about the EYFS and children's progress with other practitioners and with parents
- improve systems for sensitive observational assessments in order to plan to meet young children's individual needs and to inform the planning of future activities
- ensure all documentation as required by the EYFS including records of attendance, medication and accident records is up to date and maintained on the premises.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a well organised childminder, who has good regard for their individual needs and works in an orderly manner, to ensure children's requirements are generally being met. For example, children are offered a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities, with the childminder being aware of individual children's abilities and preferences. Most policies and procedures are in place and they are of an acceptable quality, although some are out of date. Some records such as medication, attendance and accident details are maintained in children's individual daily record books, which leave the premises with the children rather than being available with the childminder at all times.

Children are learning about the wider world as they celebrate events such as St George's Day, Hanukah and Easter. Books about sign language and small world play and people who use wheelchairs also helps children to understand diversity and value people's differences. Children's welfare is promoted as the childminder records emergency contact details and personal information to ensure appropriate care is offered. Acceptable risk assessments are on file but some home safety issues, such as access to cleaning materials and security of the premises poses risks to children. Children are protected from risks of fire as regular fire drills are undertaken and smoke detectors are frequently checked. Parents are given copies of policies and procedures and there is a signing sheet for them to complete to say they have read and understood the childminder's information. Children are kept safe by a clear complaints procedure and the contact details for the regulator (Ofsted) are openly displayed in the hall on the notice board. Records are stored in a secure, confidential manner to protect the children's and families data. Children are beginning to learn about healthy lifestyles, they wear hats and sun cream on sunny days and really enjoy receiving stickers for eating healthy foods. They wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. Paper towels help minimise the risks of cross infection and children are aware that if they do not wash their hands they will get 'germs'.

At the previous inspection, a recommendation was made to improve practice with regard to child protection procedures. This has been addressed and the childminder has increased her knowledge in this area. The childminder has begun a basic self assessment process but not all areas of practice have been assessed and few effective steps have been identified to promote improvement. The childminder has undertaken some training in relation to the EYFS and has a reasonable understanding of the framework and how to implement it to ensure children make progress.

Partnership with parents and other early years practitioners is limited and systems are not fully in place, to ensure appropriate information about children's education and welfare are exchanged.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder has a basic understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The six areas of learning are briefly mentioned in some of the children's developmental records. However, assessment and observation records are weak and inconsistently maintained, which limits children's progress towards the early learning goals. Although the childminder has provided a broad range of developmentally appropriate toys and play resources, some of them are inaccessible to children and at times the play is very adult-led. Lists are maintained of children's interests whilst in the childminder's home and out in the community but these are not used to plan activities and to develop children's learning.

Children enjoy creative activities, such as fashioning play dough type material into different shapes and making up stories in relation to the items they have formed. The childminder uses this activity as an opportunity to introduce new words, such as kangaroo and boomerang. The children describe how the play dough feels 'sticky and strong', whilst the childminder reinforces the colours of the different materials being used. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and the childminder asks them what makes them feel happy and sad, offering them reassurance about new experiences, such as starting nursery. Children are curious, friendly and polite, showing an interest in the world around them. For example, they collect snails in the garden and speak with great enthusiasm about taking snails home to show their parents.

Children are beginning to share and take turns and the childminder uses appropriate strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour. Children are encouraged to be independent and praised for their efforts and achievements, such as learning to put on their own shoes and coats. Children are learning about the wider world as they visit facilities in their local community, such as bus trips to supermarkets and fast food restaurants. Children benefit from daily outdoor play, where they use large wheeled toys and play games, such as hopscotch to encourage balance, coordination and number recognition.

Children share positive interactions with the childminder who is aware of their abilities, fears, favourite toys and activities. A daily record book is available for parents to take home and this contains brief information about children's progress and welfare. Children are well supervised whilst in the childminder's care and equipment, such as reins ensures they are safe when leaving the premises with the childminder.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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

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

Met