

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	315730
Inspection date	29/06/2009
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell
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 1992. She lives with her partner and adult daughter in the Westhoughton area of Bolton. The property is close to local schools, pre-schools, parks and shops. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time, of whom three may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged from five to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is available to provide care each weekday, on a full-time basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder effectively promotes all aspects of the children's welfare, learning and development. Consequently, children are happy, healthy and kept safe in a stimulating child centred environment. Children's learning is well supported by the childminder, who plans and provides an interesting range of age and developmentally appropriate activities, which promote children's learning and help them make good progress. The childminder works closely with parents and effectively compliments planned activities from other settings the children attend. The childminder capacity to maintain continuous improvement is strong, she regularly reviews her practice and a clear process of self evaluation has been developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the links between planned activities and planned learning intentions or next steps for individual children
- develop the assessment process, to provide a more meaningful record of children progress towards the early learning goals
- further develop system for recording risk assessments for outings

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is a very experienced practitioner who is committed to further developing the service she provides for young children and their families. She continually updates and increases her knowledge and understanding of child care issues through training, then reviews her own practice and updates relevant policies and procedures. As a result of continuous self-evaluation, the childminder has a good understanding of the settings strengths and area's for development.

She promotes inclusive practice and is mindful that some children may have learning difficulties or disabilities. Whilst this is an area where the childminder has little experience, she has attended training to further develop her knowledge.

Children are very effectively safeguarded. Regular training ensures the childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Following training, the childminder has reviewed and updated her own child protection procedures, to ensure they are consistent with her Local Safeguarding Children Board. Updated policies are promptly shared with all parents, as a result they are clear about the childminders role and responsibility in relation to safeguarding. Detailed risk assessments ensure children's safety within the childminder's home, consequently, children move around freely and play safely. Very good procedures are implemented to keep children safe on outings and written risk assessments are routinely completed. However, written records for some outings lack detail.

Partnerships with parents are very strong, many families have long standing relationships with the childminder and openly share information on a daily basis. Parents are very well informed about all aspects of the provision, via written policies and procedures which they sign and retain. Information is also prominently displayed around the childminder's home, for example, information in support of the childminder healthy eating policy and details of menus are displayed over the dining table. Information relating to planned activities is displayed in the playroom alongside a vast selection of children's photographs and artwork. Parents are well informed about their child's achievements and progress. In addition to verbal discussions, details of progress in relation to toilet training are noted in a daily communication book. Parents are also encouraged look at and comment on their child's well presented observation portfolio. Written questionnaires are also used to seek parents view on the quality of the provision and their child's development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's continued good health and welfare is effectively promoted through established good practices. Children are learning the importance of good hygiene from an early age, routine hand washing is introduced as part of the nappy changing procedure. Cloakroom facilities are very well equipped to promote independent toileting and prominently positioned posters remind children to wash their hands. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe in the sun, they know they must wear hats and play in the coolest room or in the shaded area outdoors. They access drinks independently and are reminded by the childminder to drink more in the hot weather. The childminder provides a good range of home cooked meals and routinely raises children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating. Children understand that healthy snacks are served and spontaneously request grapes. Provision for outdoor play is very good, the childminder has created a covered area adjacent to her property which facilitates outdoor play all year round. A varied selection of toys to support children learning are continually available in this area and children confidently select items from the play room to enhance their play outdoors. As a result children benefit from fresh air and sunlight which contributes to their physical wellbeing.

The childminder carefully monitors the range of activities she provides, taking particular account of part-time children, to ensure each child has experiences which promote their all round development. She provides a good range of interesting planned activities and takes account of the planned learning that is delivered at groups she attends with the children. Consequently, she enhances activities and themes that the children have enjoyed and fully supports their learning both within her home and at other settings. For example, children explore the theme of 'holidays' they make passports which are stamped every time they arrive at the childminder 'drop in', they 'write their own postcards and post them home.

Children have very good opportunities to explore their own creativity and become totally absorbed in activities of their choice. The childminder supports children well, she creates an accessible environment so children can make informed choices and ensures creative activities are well resourced. She encourages children to seek their own solutions and provides additional resources to make this possible. For example, a child identifies that the glue stick is not effective when gluing pom poms, so the childminder provides alternative glue for her to try. The child is pleased that the alternative works and through trial and error learns it is more effective to put the glue on the paper than the pom pom.

Children are making good progress in their learning and develop, the childminder provides a print rich environment and children are learning that print carries meaning. They have daily opportunities to practice and refine their counting and number skills and props are very well used to consolidate children's knowledge, for example, when singing number rhymes. The childminder has created individual 'portfolios for each child these contain an abundance of photographs which the childminder uses to evidence children learning and achievements. A number of more detailed observations further evidence children's learning but do not provide an overview of children progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder knows individual children very well, she is clear about the next steps in their learning and in practice supports them very well, however links between children's next steps and written plans are limited.

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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