

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	503809
Inspection date	19/05/2009
Inspector	Ann Bamford
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, aged 11 and 14, in Darwen. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat which is present during the time childcare is offered.

The childminder is currently registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for six children at any one time. She provides care alongside her husband who is also a registered childminder. In addition, she is part of the local authority network childminders scheme. They are currently minding six children.

The childminder collects children from local schools. She attends local parent /toddler groups and takes the children to local parks and the local library. Care is available from 08.00 until 18.00 each weekday with the exception of bank holidays. Annual holidays are negotiated individually with parents.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

All children's needs are met effectively whilst they are cared for in the setting. Children's welfare is promoted very well as the childminder works with parents and other professionals in a very skilled way. Children are very safe and secure at all times and experience enjoyment during the time they spend with the childminder. Children experience a rich variety of activities in an environment that is creatively organised for them. Children have individual next steps planned for them related to their individual needs. The childminder has begun the use of self-evaluation as a tool to identify and develop areas of her practice. As a result, the quality of childcare and education that children receive is good and consistently improved.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that next steps set for children are followed up with re-assessment and observation of what children can do
- continue to develop strategies for self-evaluation.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has high expectations for the quality of care and learning she provides. She has quickly made very effective use of the Early Years Foundation Stage document as a tool for ensuring that each child makes progress in the six areas of the early learning. The planning and organisation of the areas where

children play mean that children can choose their own toys from a range planned to move them on in a specific way. However, although next steps are regularly and skilfully planned for children, the childminder does not yet re-visit these steps to check on children's progress. This impedes the rate of progress slightly. Innovative ideas, such as encouraging children to make their own sunglasses, increases children's sense of belonging and value, and also aids the concept of how sunglasses protect eyes. The childminder's careful planning for individual children and creative use of, for example, the toy library, means that children progress through next steps in their development.

Working in partnership with parents and other professionals is a strength of the childminder's service. She involves parents and other providers of care for children in gathering information, planning next steps for children and planning outings. She has a wealth of experience of recognising and discussing children's individual needs. She is well able to identify areas of concern and assist parents in working with other professionals, for example, to ensure that a child's hearing and behavioural needs are properly addressed. This enhances children's experience of consistency of quality care.

Documentation is very efficiently used for both the safe management of her provision and as a means of ensuring that children are making good progress in each area of learning. The area where children are cared for is risk assessed on a daily and ongoing basis. Outings too are regularly assessed. The childminder skilfully discusses these with children in order to encourage them to recognise and minimise risks for themselves; for example, what a fire plan looks like. As a result, children are safe and developing a sophisticated awareness of how to keep safe. Written risk assessments are in place for outings. The childcare area is regularly modified to ensure that children have maximum access to toys and equipment while still keeping them safe in the indoor and outdoor environment. The childminder regularly reviews documentation and has begun to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of her practice with both her co-childminder and parents. However, this is not yet fully organised into regular planned self-evaluation, though developments to improve practice do take place.

Children benefit from the childminder's drive for improvement. She quickly implemented the improvements to her practice raised at the last inspection and has undertaken the local authority network training to ensure that she continues to develop her setting. Her regular attendance on courses and skill in weaving new knowledge and understanding into practice mean that children can experience new ways of learning and having fun. For example, the childminder and children discuss how warm the weather is. Children choose whether to play indoors or outdoors and the childminder helps their learning by discussing with them how the sun makes them feel warm. This increases children's ability to attend to their own body temperature needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good. The childminder supports children's learning effectively. She has a robust understanding of the different stages of children's development and

learning and, as a result, children's individual learning needs are promoted. Children choose whether they are in or out of doors throughout the time they are cared for. Observation and assessment are used skilfully to create an environment where the child can be an active learner with the challenge provided by the childminder to think critically. They select their own toys and respond to the skilled childminder's challenge to find out other ways of using them, for example, to find other features on a toy telephone or to use a glue spreader to make marks and create circles. Children are involved in everyday activities, such as helping to plan meals, tidy away and bake. Older children are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves; for example, putting their own coats and shoes on or setting the computer up independently.

Children's individual progress is charted with care; the next steps are agreed with parents. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities are assisted to make progress through the childminder's sensitive planning. She defines, for example, which socialisation skills need challenge and finds an agreed way forward with parents and other professionals. All children enjoy a challenging and enjoyable experience as the childminder uses everyday occurrences, such as nappy changing, to help children learn parts of the body and right from left.

Children's welfare is promoted very well. All children learn how to maintain their own health and well-being from a very early age as they are encouraged to indicate their needs for food and drink, nappy changing and sleep. Her encouragement of children to tell, for example, when they need the toilet, both increases the child's sense of value and empowers the child to recognise how to meet their own needs. Children develop an awareness of different cultures as the childminder plans celebrations and attends groups where this is a focus, for example, Eid celebrations in a local childminder group. Older children request food and drink with increasing independence. Children develop an awareness of preventing cross-infection as they talk about washing hands with the childminder after use of the toilet. All children have a very good awareness of safety as they learn, for example, to clear away toys before more come out or describe how they will act in the event of a fire.

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?	3
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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