

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	505672
Inspection date	10/08/2009
Inspector	Chris Mackinnon
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 has been registered since 2000. She lives with her husband and their three children aged 16, 14 and five years, in Eastbourne, East Sussex. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor activities. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of four minded children may attend at any time, with no more than three children in the early years age group. The childminder currently has three children on roll, with all three in the early years age group. The childminder attends local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder demonstrates a good knowledge of individual children, and successfully supports their welfare and learning. Her home is secure and safely organised, with well prepared play areas, and good access to outdoor activities. The childminder is effective in meeting all the children's care and development needs, and works closely with parents to support their healthy growth and development. She organises a stimulating range of activities to promote children's learning, and takes care to observe and accurately record children's progress and achievements. The childminder is developing her use of self-evaluation and has a positive approach to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop planning to provide more support for individual children's learning
- increase the use of self-evaluation to maintain continuous improvement

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder successfully manages and provides well organised childcare. She is well established and has been registered for almost ten years. She is also part of a local network of childminders. A key strength within her care provision is her high level of training and experience. She has completed training in childminding practice to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3, and has also attended training to support her knowledge and application of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The childminder frequently attends network drop-ins and other organised events, where childminders can gather to share group activities, and support their children's learning. There are other notable strengths within the childminder's practice, particularly with her knowledge and implementation of the EYFS framework, as well as her detailed and thorough approach to the recording and assessment of individual children's learning progress.

The childminder has a developing understanding of the need to evaluate her play and learning programme. She is able to review the quality of the activities provided, and generally relies on her knowledge of individual children's learning needs and the progress they make. She effectively recognises the need for reflective practice, as demonstrated by her re-working of the methods used to record children's achievements. However, the childminder is not making full use of self-evaluation and her confidence with identifying areas for improvement, is currently limited.

The childminder has good relationships with parents, and works effectively with them, to successfully promote children's healthy growth and development. Parents benefit from close support and regular contact with the childminder, and have access to clear information on the children's play themes, activities and outings. Much good use is also made of the childminder's well kept and well presented learning records; which she uses effectively to help parents monitor and appreciate their children's learning progress.

The childminder is a confident provider, with an effective awareness of safeguarding and the need to protect children. She takes care to ensure children are safe and secure, and also successfully encourages children to feel happy and settled within her home. The childminder has attended training in safeguarding, and has access to clear written policy guidance on child protection procedure.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder's organisation of activities and her planning for learning shows a definite commitment to supporting children's achievement. The childminder uses a range of learning themes, that are well matched to the six areas of learning. This is then broken down into activities, that are planned over a period, and organised to provide challenges for children, and promote their abilities. She also plans and prepares the learning environment appropriately, to support children's learning. The childminder's planning is well organised in its long and mid-term elements, and successfully guides a sound learning programme. Children's interests and their own ideas are considered, but not consistently, and the childminder's planning to support individual children's learning is not yet fully developed.

The childminder shows a good ability to promote and extend children's learning. This is demonstrated by her consistent use of questions and prompts to helping children extend and explore, particularly with shapes and colours and counting. Also during activities, the childminder shows consistent support for children's speech and use of language. For example, during assembly and building activities, she encourages children's speech and verbal confidence, with frequent questions and repeating word sounds. The childminder takes care to ensure children's personal and social learning is also promoted during play sessions, particularly when children of different ages play together. The childminder also has a clear strength in her understanding and implementation of EYFS framework, and her ability to move between the six areas of learning is effectively demonstrated during the range of play activities provided.

The systematic observation and assessment of children's learning is also well established within the childminder's practice. The childminder has organised document folders for each child and carries out regular written assessments of their learning progress. She has applied reflective practice to develop and improve her learning records, and now has an up-dated version that includes more detail on children's movement through the early learning goals, and information on their next steps in learning. Much good use is also made of photos and children's own artwork, to record and chart children's development. The childminder also supports parents and includes them in the recording of their children's achievements.

The childminder ensures children's welfare is effectively supported. Her home is well organised for children's activities, with a sound range of safety and security procedures in place. Clear risk assessments are also used and the childminder makes regular checks of the play equipment and play areas used, including outdoor play. The childminder effectively promotes children's health and development and children have healthy meals and snacks. For example, during snack-time, children can choose from a good selection of cut fresh fruits. Children are also encouraged to try new foods and join in with cooking activities.

Children enjoy their activities and achieve well at the setting. The childminder provides a well organised play and learning environment that engages children and promotes their development. Children choose resources and have many types of role play, which challenges their thinking and inventiveness. For example, during an activity involving a play-shop, children are able to explore mark-making and develop their confidence with writing. The childminder also shows skill in the way she organises activities to support the learning progress of children of different ages. She also takes particular care with the promotion of children's speech and use of language. For example, she has regular story-times, where children can be still and quiet for a while, and benefit from her close guidance with their reading and appreciation of books. Children gain significantly from the wide range of activities provided, and also develop good skills to support their future learning.

The childminder provides regular opportunities for children to have outdoor play and learning. Children have easy access to her back garden play areas, from the lounge-diner where most of the indoor play and learning takes place. Good use is made of the deck area, for outdoor meals and snacks, mark-making activities and messy-play. Children benefit greatly from the childminder's free play and physical play area, where they can be expressive and enjoy a slide and other larger play equipment items. The childminder uses her experience and training successfully to manage children's behaviour and promote their social skills. During activities, she helps children learn to share and take turns. Supporting children's awareness of others, and encouraging them to play happily together, is a regular daily feature within childminder's care and learning programme. She also takes care to ensure children have an understanding of diversity, and their awareness of the wider world is positively promoted.

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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