

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	953309
Inspection date	01/06/2009
Inspector	Jane Mount
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 1999. She lives with her husband and four children who are 16, 14, 11, and eight years of age. The property is situated close to the village of Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire and is within walking distance to parks, shops and schools. Most of the ground floor is used for childminding purposes. This consists of a hall, study area, kitchen and family room, utility area and cloakroom. The lounge is used occasionally for quiet activities or sleep and rest. The first floor is not included in the registration. There is a secure rear garden for outdoor play and the family have a dog, two cats, a rabbit and a guinea pig as pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The registration is for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of which three may be in the early years age range. The childminder is currently caring for four children, all of whom are in the early years age group and they attend on a part-time basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder provides effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children are safeguarded and their welfare needs are met through the childminder's sound practice and implementation of some highly effective policies and procedures. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are fully met. Children feel at home in the childminding environment and share secure, friendly relationships with the childminder. Children are making good progress in their learning and development with learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate and engage children. Processes of self-evaluation to ensure continued improvement are being developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is focused on helping all children make good progress in their learning and development and in promoting their welfare. She has worked hard to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the EYFS framework and this is reflected in her practice. Children benefit greatly from a childminder who understands the importance of professional development. For example, the

childminder is currently completing a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level three childcare qualification. She understands the need for continued improvement and the recommendations made at her last inspection have been successfully addressed. She is overall aware of her key strengths and areas for further development and some procedures are already in place to monitor the effectiveness of her practice. For example, the childminder regularly reviews her records, policies and procedures, which are required for the safe and efficient management of the setting, to ensure they are up-to-date. The childminder is beginning to develop a system of self-evaluation to monitor and evaluate her practice to ensure continued improvement.

Documentation is shared with parents, generally well-organised and confidentiality is always maintained. A range of informative policies and procedures are used effectively by the childminder to protect children and to promote their well-being. The environment is safe and supportive and gives children many opportunities to make choices. The childminder is very conscious of safety and ensures children are closely supervised at all times. Written risk assessments are in place to ensure potential hazards to children are identified and minimised and consequently children remain safe. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children's welfare and knows what to do if she did have a concern to protect children from harm.

The childminder successfully organises her time and resources to ensure children's needs are fully met. She shows a strong commitment to inclusive practice and takes great care to find out about and to meet the needs of each child in her care. For example, useful information gained from parents at the initial visit is used by the childminder to plan and provide care and learning that meets children's individual needs and ensures they are fully supported. Parents are provided with good quality information. For example, a portfolio is available and they receive their own copies of the settings policies and procedures. Information is then verbally exchanged on a daily basis between the childminder and parents to ensure parents are fully informed of their children's care, learning and development. Some links are in place with other early years settings to promote the integration of care and education and to ensure children are fully supported. For example, the childminder is aware of the topics covered at the local nursery that children attend and these are sometimes incorporated into her own planning of activities for children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder uses the EYFS framework to plan a varied range of activities and play experiences for children. Children have an enjoyable time in the childminder's care and participate in activities which are developmentally appropriate and children are making good progress in their learning and development. She uses information gained from observation and assessment systems when planning play experiences for children and planning is flexible and is led by children's interests. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. The childminder knows the children in her care well and uses this information to promote their learning. She supports children in their play, asking questions and engaging them in

conversation to encourage their language and communication skills. For example, they discuss the pictures when completing jigsaw puzzles or talk about favourite characters when looking at books. Children's physical development is promoted and full use is made of the indoor and outdoor environment. They take part in a range of activities to encourage and promote their physical skills such as playing football in the garden or joining in with music and movement sessions. They regularly visit the park and enjoy playing on the swings or climbing. Children are able to express themselves creatively and participate in regular art and craft activities. For example, they enjoy the sensory experience of hand painting or playing with playdough with glitter in for added interest. The childminder uses daily routines and activities to incorporate children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills such as counting how many cars they can see when out walking or counting the coloured beads on an abacus. The childminder promotes a positive awareness of diversity through encouraging discussion and through a range of resources which help children develop a positive attitude to others. Children's understanding of the environment is increased through regular nature walks and children keenly participate in activities such as planting and growing sunflower seeds.

The childminder implements some effective strategies to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. Children's health is protected as good hygiene practices are in place to ensure the risk of cross infection is minimised. For example, through discussion children learn the importance of personal care routines, such as, why they must wash their hands after visiting the toilet or after playing with the family dog. Children are provided with a healthy and balanced diet and the childminder works closely with parents to ensure they are aware of their child's daily dietary intake. Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating. For example, through discussion children learn the importance of eating nutritious foods such as fruit and vegetables and are aware that sweets are bad for teeth. Children's safety is fully protected and they develop a good understanding of keeping themselves and others safe. For example, when playing they are beginning to understand they must not throw toys as they may hit someone and hurt them. When out they discuss road safety and how to cross the road safely. Clear emergency evacuation procedures are in place which are practised with the children to ensure they know how to stay safe in an emergency. Children's behaviour is managed well. Positive behaviour is promoted and children receive consistent praise for their efforts and this develops their self-esteem and sense of achievement. Children behave well because they are aware of their boundaries through the use of simple house rules such as sharing and taking turns and, through discussion, children learn to respect and cooperate with others.

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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