

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY100807
Inspection date	22/04/2009
Inspector	Susan Parker
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 2002. She lives with her husband and their two children aged eight and 10 years in Hatfield, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding including the lounge, kitchen, downstairs toilet and a bedroom upstairs for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding five children in this age range on a part-time basis. She also offers care to children over five years to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family has a dog, two cats and a pet mouse. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is good. The childminder gains detailed knowledge of each child's individual needs which ensures that she successfully promotes all aspects of children's welfare, learning and development. Children's safety and security are a priority and the children are learning about keeping themselves safe while investigating the world around them. The partnership with parents, the local pre-school and other agencies is very good and is highly significant in ensuring that the individual and diverse needs of all children are exceptionally well-met. This greatly benefits the children who make good progress, given their age, ability and starting points. Parental questionnaires and regular self-evaluation by the childminder ensures that she successfully analyses her practice and enhances ideas for future development. This effectively responds to all the diverse needs of the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the organisation of the documentation and recording
- develop further the matching of observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The good leadership and management of this setting successfully underpins the welfare and learning of the children. The childminder is very effective in her organisation of the high levels of individual care and learning for each child. Every child's individual needs are well-recorded and met. Robust safeguarding policies, good daily practice, and a commitment to training ensures that children are safe and well-protected. She has a detailed understanding of child protection and is

committed to promoting children's safety at all times. This includes teaching the children to play safely and be aware of possible hazards. Well-planned, creative and imaginative activities, visits and outings enable the children to practice their skills and explore their environment safely.

Children thrive in this organised and stimulating environment where the childminder is introducing systems to monitor and evaluate the provision, including consultations with parents. Parents and carers receive detailed information regarding their children, including all aspects of their welfare and developmental achievements. This includes a detailed portfolio containing information on the childminder's experience and a full written set of policies and procedures.

The childminder has a very positive attitude and is fully committed to enhancing the welfare, learning and development of every child attending. Every child's individual and diverse needs are fully met. Regular observations of the children are recorded and many photographs are taken. Each child has a detailed record of their achievements and individual needs. This is regularly updated from observations to link to the expectations of the early learning goals. The childminder is currently evaluating these systems to make them more user friendly. She provides a wide selection of good quality toys and resources that are age appropriate and in excellent condition. A book of photographs of all the equipment available is used to promote children's choice of resources without having to store everything in one area, allowing more free play space for the children.

Any accidents are recorded and the home checked daily for hazards. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate and has an excellent awareness of keeping children safe; she regularly assesses the home and takes appropriate precautions to keep children from harm. Through the childminder, the children are learning very good habits, for example, washing their hands before eating, and that fresh air and exercise are fun.

The childminder is very effective in working in close partnership with the parents, other settings and other professionals. Through this effective partnership, she ensures that she has a very good understanding of each child's individually and is able to fully include them in all activities.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are developing well in this provision where their individual needs are met. The childminder knows each child very well and is able to provide them with interesting and exciting games, resources and activities which stimulate their natural curiosity and imagination. Children are safe and secure in this provision. They are adopting healthy habits. For example, using their own towels and toothbrushes and routinely washing hands before snack or after touching the pets.

Children have regular access to outdoor play and are always dressed appropriately for the weather. They mix with other children frequently, and are establishing very good social skills as well as firm friendships. This actively promotes children's feelings of self-esteem, confidence and independence.

Children's language and communication is actively promoted. Children are encouraged to be very social, they are encouraged to talk and the childminder really listens to what the children are saying. Children are encouraged to think critically as the childminder asks them appropriate questions about what they are doing and what may happen next. They are developing their vocabulary everyday through sharing books and talking about their experiences. Children are forming a good understanding of problem solving and numeracy; they recognise shapes very well and are able to complete challenging puzzles. Children's mathematical thinking is promoted as an integral part of all activities such as counting cars, recognising colours and familiar numerals. They are learning about the world around them through mixing in the local community, looking at seasons and growing plants themselves. Children are very well-supported and are encouraged to try to do as much independently as they can with full support from the childminder.

Every child's milestones and achievements are recorded by the childminder and she effectively plans the next steps to challenge the children to ensure an excellent progression towards the early learning goals.

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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