

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY221379
Inspection date	28/04/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and nine years in their house in Tring, Hertfordshire. The childminder uses the whole of the house for childminding, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four 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 four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to the local school to deliver and collect children and takes them to the local park. The family has a pet dog and two guinea pigs. The childminder is a member of Tring childminder's group, who meet on a regular basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the provision is good. Children are happy and confident in this home from home environment where the childminder uses her substantial experience to effectively promote most aspects of children's care and education in a fully inclusive manner. Children make good progress in their learning and development, although observation and assessment systems are not yet sufficiently linked to the Practice Guidance criteria to show progression. The childminder builds positive relationships with parents and other professionals involved in the lives of children to underpin their welfare. She has begun to explore processes for identifying strengths and weaknesses in her provision to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the quality improvement process as the basis for continuous self-evaluation to identify strengths and take appropriate action to address weaknesses
- develop the planning and assessment system, linking more closely to the Practice Guidance criteria, to demonstrate how the activities and observations are used to identify learning priorities for individual children and clearly show their progression.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children experience a good quality of care and education in this 'home from home' family environment, supported by clear, specific, policies and procedures and all required written records. Documentation is available for parents and the partnership is strengthened by information in the hallway and dialogue on delivery and collection of each child. All activities involve all the children at their individual

developmental level and the childminder confidently liaises with outside agencies to provide good care and support for children with language and communication delay. The childminder devises flexible plans arranged under the six areas of learning. The childminder has begun to make insightful, annotated photographic observations of children's learning. She takes photographs and makes notes about each child's achievements. However, planning and assessment systems do not yet clearly demonstrate the progress which children make because they are not closely linked to the criteria in the Practice Guidance document.

Extremely effective communication strategies demonstrate the value placed upon partnership working by the childminder who makes every effort to keep parents informed about details of their child's time with her. Children's individual needs are discussed in depth with parents at the pre-placement stage and re-visited regularly during daily conversations with parents and carers. Children's welfare is properly safeguarded because the childminder has attended appropriate training on child protection and has relevant reference materials to hand. The childminder is extremely vigilant and preventative action is always taken to address identified hazards and effectively minimise the risk to children. The childminder has begun to explore the self-evaluation form as a means of monitoring her practice and recognises the value of this as a tool for securing continuous improvement in the future.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have lots of fun in this calm environment where age-appropriate toys and resources are educational and support learning. Children become active learners who explore from the security of a close relationship with the caring and responsive childminder. For example, they are happy to refer to her and readily respond to the warm smiles and cuddles which she offers. Children develop independence and the ability to make choices and decisions and the childminder readily responds to child-led play, sustaining a high quality of interaction with the children which develops positive attitudes to learning. For example, children sit and play a game of 'Greedy Gorilla', a matching game which provides context for discussion about healthy and non-healthy foods. The children are totally engrossed in the game, taking turns and sharing. Non-healthy items are fed to the gorilla and he burps, which prompts giggles of delight and enjoyment. Children show curiosity in some new hand puppets. The childminder puts them on and demonstrates how she draws learning from child-initiated play, singing the song of 'There were 10 in the bed'. Children join in and help to count and calculate how many are left in the bed. Another mitt shows characters with different expressions and the childminder encourages the children to describe how each one is feeling.

Children clearly enjoy a wide range of activities which cover the six areas of learning. The childminder takes the children to social groups where they can interact with other children and develop their skills in building relationships with a wide range of people. Children stay healthy and have daily fresh air and exercise because they regularly play in the local parks and walk in the local area. Photographs show children enjoying trips to the canal to feed ducks and see the boats, and playing games of hide and seek at Wendover Woods. Children plant

and grow vegetables in the garden and grow mushrooms in a kitchen kit. Suitable documentation is maintained relating to accidents, medication and incidents and clear, robust, procedures are in place, protecting the children's health and well-being. The children learn about keeping safe in the home and beside the road. Children's behaviour is managed well because the childminder has consistent expectations and prompts them with a small reminder of 'we don't do that do we?'. Effective strategies ensure their social, physical and economic well-being are very well met.

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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