

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY222056
Inspection date	03/12/2008
Inspector	Kim Wailling
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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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 2002 and lives with her husband and two adult children in London Colney, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom is used for childminding purposes. There is a rear garden available for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via a slope.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children on the Early Years and Childcare Register. She is currently caring for four children on the Early Years and Childcare Registers. She operates on five days a week for 52 weeks of the year. The premise offers level access from the road. The family has a dog.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The childminder provides very effectively for children in the early years age group. Children's individual needs are known and the childminder fully works in partnership with parents to ensure that these are consistently met. The childminder has taken a great deal of care to organise her home to allow all children to develop their independence skills and participate safely in activities. In addition, comprehensive policies, procedures and records are in place which supports the childminder in safeguarding children and keeping them safe. Children's individual learning and development is exceptionally well supported so that they make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. Resources have been carefully selected and are used to promote children's understanding of diversity. Some systems are in place to monitor and improve quality of service that the childminder offers children of all ages.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for children to find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world.
- develop further a culture of reflective practice and self-evaluation

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a caring but professional approach and has attended many courses, often on Saturdays, to keep herself updated on recent changes and initiatives to ensure that she offers a very high standard of care to children of all ages. Both recommendations made at the last inspection, surrounding first aid and safeguarding children, have been fully and comprehensively addressed which enhances children's welfare and well-being. Keeping children safe is a priority of the childminder and very good routines, policies and records are followed at all times. Working in partnership with parents is well established.

The childminder is taking some steps to reflect on her practice and the service that she offers children. She has identified one area of learning: increasing children's understanding and knowledge of the world, as an area that she wishes to improve. Consequently, this has been raised as a recommendation in this report.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder has created an exciting learning environment for children in her home. Children can choose from a wide range of toys and outdoor equipment which are of high quality and are age-appropriate. Books, story bags and role play resources in particular have been carefully chosen so that they represent positive images of diversity. This is supplemented by outings to local places of interest, parent and toddler groups and weekly attendance at a childminder's support group. This group offers children opportunities to take part in planned activities and make new friends. Overall, an excellent range of planned, purposeful play experiences is offered that encourages children to be active learners and helps them make progress in all areas of their development. There is a very good balance of adult-led and child-led activities to ensure that each child receives a range of very enjoyable and challenging experiences across the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). For example, the childminder ensures that a child's favourite selection of toys, including a Noah's Ark, are available and uses this interest in animals as a springboard for other activities such as outings to a local children's farm. As a result, children are helped to gain new skills and consolidate existing knowledge. Events and festivals such as Yom Kippur are celebrated to help children gain an insight into the lives of others who live in the local community.

Highly effective ongoing planning and assessment systems which help the childminder support children's progress are in place. These include photographs and illuminating observations which help the childminder identify individual children's preferred learning styles which inform both the daily routine and activity planning. This is one of the many strengths of the setting. Information about the children's day and their progress is shared with parents so that all are fully involved in supporting children in their learning.

Children's independence skills are well fostered as the childminder has made adaptations to her home so that tasks such as hand washing can be carried out easily. They respond to her warm and calm approach and behave well. Group activities such as making egg free Halloween biscuits, as one of the children has a food allergy, are undertaken to encourage children to work collaboratively. Older children are skilfully guided to help them respond to the expectations of those who work with them and learn how to share and take turns.

Children's good health is promoted through the daily routine. For example, attention is paid to ensure drinks are freely available to children. Individual children's health needs are accommodated in a sensitive way and further training has been undertaken by the childminder to help her understand and deal with children's particular needs. Very good steps are taken to keep children safe. These

include a detailed risk assessment which includes a fire evacuation plan which is practised with the children. Procedures which safeguard children are in place. In addition, the childminder updates her understanding of safeguarding issues which further protects children from harm. Overall, all records, policies and procedures that are required for the efficient management of the setting and the welfare of children are well maintained to ensure good and in some areas outstanding outcomes for children.

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?	1
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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
---	-----

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
--	-----

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.