

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY253481
Inspection date	30/11/2009
Inspector	Anna Davies
Type of setting	Childminder

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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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband and three children aged seven and four years in a village just outside of Bedford in Bedfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access into and out of the childminder's home is at ground level and there are downstairs toilet facilities.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three 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 two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 12 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to provide overnight care for a maximum of two children. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant in school holidays enabling her to care for a maximum of five children under eight years. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, shops and parks. The family have two rabbits and keep two Axolotyls lizards.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are offered a wide range of stimulating activities and outings and make good progress in their learning and development. The childminder uses her clear knowledge about children's individual needs and interests to ensure that she provides an inclusive environment. The childminder fosters strong partnerships with parents, ensuring that children experience continuity and consistency in their care. All of the required policies, procedures and records are in place and used effectively to safeguard children's health, safety and welfare.

The childminder clearly understands her own strengths and has identified areas that she wishes to further develop in the future in order to continually improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that assessment records can be used to effectively track and evidence children's progress towards the early learning goals
- develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to further support children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibility towards safeguarding children; the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should she have concerns about a child in her care. She has attended recent training in this area to further promote and refresh her knowledge and understanding. All household members over the age of 16 years have been appropriately vetted and the childminder has a good understanding of notifying Ofsted of significant events that may affect the care of children. The premises are safe and secure both indoors and outdoors. Children's safety is promoted effectively when on outings. For example, children wear high visibility jackets and the childminder ensures that she takes with her all children's contact details and relevant permissions to seek emergency medical advice and treatment should the need arise. Risk assessments are clearly recorded and are effective. For example, the garden fence has been blown down in the recent strong wind and the trampoline is currently not suitable for use so the garden is currently not being used until these items have been repaired.

A good range of written policies and procedures are in place which effectively underpin practice and ensure children's safety and welfare. The childminder is committed to continually improving her practice and has attended a good range of training initiatives since her last inspection to help further her own professional development. Children make use of a designated playroom where they are able to access a good range of toys and resources. The childminder brings a selection of toys out into the lounge area for the youngest children to give them more space on the floor to play and explore. She is very aware of children's individual needs, routines and interests and encourages children to contribute their ideas and views, for example, when deciding on the weekly planning of activities.

Partnerships with parents are strong. They are encouraged to share what they know about their children when they begin in the childminder's care and this information forms part of the childminder's initial assessment for each child. A daily diary contains written information from the childminder about the children's day and there is opportunity here for parents to make written contributions about what they know about their children on an on-going basis. Parents become involved in their children's learning through sharing observations that the childminder also records in the diaries and getting together with the childminder at coffee afternoons to discuss their children's progress. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about past and up and coming events. The childminder has good relationships with other providers also delivering the EYFS to children in her care such as the local school and has plans about how to further develop these partnerships. She is aware of activities and topics planned for the children at school. However, there is no system in place to share specific information about individual children's learning and development in order that she can support the work of other providers and to promote consistency between settings in relation to the child's learning experience.

The childminder strives to provide the best service she can for both the children and parents and seeks their regular feedback in order to ensure that she continually meets their needs. Parents speak very highly of the quality of care offered; the flexibility in her provision and the support she offers. Children comment that they really enjoy each others company and like going to the childminder's house. The childminder has effective systems of self-evaluation in place and demonstrates that she is able to identify areas to improve and take steps to action these. The recommendation from the last inspection has been effectively actioned. As a result, children now have a wide range of multicultural dressing up clothes, celebrate multicultural festivals and enjoy dual language books. These activities enable children to begin to appreciate the diverse society in which they live.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities covering all areas of learning. Weekly plans are created based on routine trips to and from school and attendance at local groups as well as on children's suggestions and ideas for activities. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding about how children learn and works hard to ensure that all children enjoy their time with her and make good progress in their learning and development. Regular observations are recorded in children's daily diaries. These are linked to the areas of learning and next steps are identified and used to inform the planning and support of future activities. However, there is no clear system to be able to track or securely evidence the progress children are making across each area of learning, towards the early learning goals.

The childminder takes time to build a genuine bond with children new to her provision, valuing the one-to-one time that she is able to spend with individual children during school hours. She offers them cuddles and reassurance, giving them good eye contact to ensure that they feel safe and secure in her care. Children develop independence as they are encouraged to feed themselves at snack time and do up their own coat. They learn to work together, for example, during team games and when they put on 'plays' for the childminder using their imaginative ideas. The childminder responds positively to babies as they vocalise and communicate their feelings and needs. For example, when they no longer want to play on the floor, the childminder bounces them on her knee instead. As babies enjoy their milk feed, they watch the childminder's face as she asks them 'what can you see?'. These activities ensure that young children develop good communication skills. Children enjoy a range of books. For example, babies enjoy the electronic sound effects as the childminder reads a book to them. Children are beginning to solve simple problems as they work out how to operate pop up toys. The childminder models the action required and encourages babies to repeat this and therefore learn to make connections in their play. Children learn about numbers in a fun and meaningful way, for example, by identifying numbers on the front doors of houses when out walking. Babies are curious about objects such as the 'rainmaker' musical instrument, watching and listening as the beads fall from top to bottom. They learn about other living things as they help to feed the pet

rabbits and watch the Axolotyls lizards in the tank. Children take part in many trips out to local places of interest which further promotes their interest in the local environment and community. Babies physical needs are well cared for. For example, routines for eating and sleeping are followed. As babies develop their sitting skills, the childminder supports them with bean bags to ensure they can develop these skills safely. Children enjoy lots of opportunities to have exercise and fresh air, walking to and from school and regular trips to the parks. They develop their creativity through a good range of arts and crafts activities, such as stone painting and making gingerbread houses. Children enjoy dressing up and developing their imaginative ideas, for example, through role play.

Children learn about safety through taking part in creating house rules and regular fire drills. On outings they learn about keeping themselves safe whilst wearing high visibility jackets and learning the highway code. They are encouraged to use equipment safely and develop an awareness of the dangers of strangers. Children's welfare is promoted effectively. They are cared for in a very clean and well maintained environment where effective procedures ensure that cross-contamination is minimised. For example, nappy changing procedures are hygienic and children are encouraged to wash their hands after toileting and after stroking the pet rabbits. Sleeping arrangements for children requiring a rest during the day or for those staying overnight are good; they have clean bedding and a travel cot or bed appropriate for their needs. The childminder works with parents with regards to the provision of food. The healthy eating policy sets out the childminders commitment towards ensuring children are provided with a healthy range of foods and the snacks that she provides contribute towards children's five portions a day of fruit and vegetables. The childminder promotes positive behaviour through reward charts; praising and encouraging children as they walk nicely to school, are considerate of others or to help tidy away toys. Children are then able to choose a specific treat for Friday which is 'treat day'.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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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