

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY272544
Inspection date	19/05/2010
Inspector	Donna Stevens
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 child aged seven in a house in Kidderminster. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. She works with an assistant. The family has a dog, a rabbit, two guinea pigs, some fish and some chickens.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range when working alone. When working with an assistant they may care for no more than six children under eight, all of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently seven children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, some of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local childminding group. She is accredited to receive government funding for three and four year olds and is part of the Worcestershire Childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of children's individual needs allowing her to promote children's welfare and learning extremely well. Children are happy and secure and enjoy an extensive range of exciting activities. Ongoing self evaluation and quality assurance lead to improvements that have an immediate impact on children's welfare, safety and development. The partnerships with parents and other settings providing children's care are strong and significant in ensuring that the needs of all children are met effectively, along with any additional support needs. This enables children to make excellent progress.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further the system for gathering the opinions of children and parents to include in the settings' self evaluation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well safeguarded with high quality, robust policies and procedures that work in practice. The childminder has an excellent understanding of her roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children's welfare. Attending training on a regular basis allows her to keep her knowledge and understanding up to date and in line with local guidance. A daily risk assessment of the indoor and outdoor play areas ensure that the environment remains safe and risks to children are minimised. Risk assessments for outings demonstrate an emphasis on encouraging children to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe by following simple rules and expectations.

The childminder is highly committed to her own self development, ongoing evaluation of her practice and quality assurance. She regularly attends local training events and workshops and shares good practice with other local providers at meetings. She has completed the National Childminding Association Quality Assurance scheme to level three and has used this and the Ofsted self evaluation system to help her identify areas of improvement. For example, the Kitchen, dining area and playroom have been redesigned to provide a more open plan, free flow area for the children to use. It provides direct access to the outdoor area and plenty of space for the children to expand their play and self select their own toys and resources. These alterations allow the childminder and her assistant to provide a high level of supervision both inside and outside. A successful capital funding bid has enabled the childminder to purchase equipment for children to learn about information technology and develop important skills of the future.

The childminder develops close working relationships with parents and carers. High quality policies and procedures are shared with them and daily discussions and contact through the day by text message keep them informed of how the children are spending their time, achievements and milestones that are reached and valuable welfare information. She actively encourages parents to share not only information about their individual children, but their thoughts and opinions on the service provided. She now plans to formalise these systems to enable her to include this information in her self evaluation. Partnerships with other settings the children attend are strong and enable children to make the transition from one setting to another smoothly.

The childminder is highly effective in promoting equality of opportunity and meeting children's individual needs. Parents comment on how their individual family lives and values are taken into consideration and how the childminder personalises her service for each child. She shares small anecdotes and conversations that have happened during the day so that parents feel part of the setting. The childminder is confident in helping children to understand the feelings of others and seeks their opinions on any changes she makes within the home such as moving furniture in the playroom. This gives children a sense of belonging and feeling valued.

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

Children make outstanding progress toward the early learning goals and in all areas of their development because the childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy a wide range of exciting activities that develop their curiosity and encourage them to use problem solving skills. While playing with water they fill different sized containers from a water butt and watch the effect as they pour it into other substances such as peat. They develop emergent writing skills as they paint with water on paving slabs and watch in fascination as it dries and disappears in the sun. On other occasions they will use drainpipes between trays to watch how water flows with gravity and look at the speed it travels if the pipe is lifted higher. Their knowledge and understanding of the natural world is developed as a water flows that they are growing and begin to understand how to care for living things.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and assistant. They both support the children's play well, but take the lead from the children, encouraging them to choose their own toys and activities. Spontaneous activities such as the emergence of baby blue tits from the nesting box on the side of the house provide the opportunity for children to ask questions and learn about new life. They are keen to hold and stroke the family rabbit and guinea pig and excitedly collect eggs from and feed the chickens. They eagerly demonstrate how they are learning about the life cycle of the tadpole as they watch some in a plastic tank slowly begin to change and look at books and pictures of what they will become.

The childminder and assistant spend a great deal of time talking to the children, encouraging their vocabulary in conversation skills and seeking their opinions and ideas. They visit the library each week and have their own book bags, selecting a book each to take home to share with their parents. Children develop excellent pencil control from a young age and use resources from low level storage to practise their mark making and drawing skills. They are confident and articulate, engaging in conversation with visitors to the home. They are able to work together in pairs or small groups to achieve a task, such as, feeding and carrying a large container filled with water that would be too heavy for one of them. They willingly take turns with popular equipment and praise each other's achievements. Children are encouraged to be independent, taking care of their own personal needs, such as, going to the toilet and they know to wash their hands after playing in the garden and before mealtimes.

Healthy eating is actively encouraged and the childminder provides children with healthy snacks and meals. Children sit together at the dinner table developing social skills and table manners. They develop an excellent understanding of healthy eating through activities, such as, cooking and growing their own fruit and vegetables. They spend a great deal of time enjoying outdoor play in the garden and regularly visit local parks where a variety of play equipment helps to develop their physical skills. They become part of the local community as they visit local childminding and toddler groups and sessions at the local children's centre. Their understanding of diversity and difference is enhanced as they meet other children

and join in activities that introduce them to festivals and celebrations from other cultures.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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