

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY298891
Inspection date	17/12/2008
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
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).

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 January 2005. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and four years in Shefford, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via level pavement with a single step.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to provide four places for children. There are currently eight children attending part-time hours, three of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The children live locally or travel from the surrounding areas. Two children attend other settings such as the early years unit of the local primary school and the local pre-school. The childminder is able to provide care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The childminder provides very effectively for children within the EYFS and promotes their welfare with success. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and methods to work with parents and carers ensure that all children's individual needs are addressed and met. Children are engaged with activities that are planned around flexible themes adapted to meet children's interest, enabling them to make good progress. The partnership with both parents and other settings providing for children within the EYFS have been established to ensure a three-way approach to continuity of care for children. The childminder is able to bring about continued development because she has effective procedures for self-evaluation that enable her to understand her strengths and weaknesses.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of planning and assessment to show how they link to the next steps for children, show the progress which children are making and ensure that initial starting points involve parental input
- develop opportunities for children to recognise and respect different languages and cultures and develop an understanding of each person's individuality
- ensure hazards to children are kept to a minimum, with reference to the wine rack, security of sharp knives and using the locks on kitchen cupboards.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare of children. The childminder has a firm understanding of issues relating to safeguarding and holds all relevant details. She has extended her knowledge by attending training on topics such as, working with disabilities, EYFS and planned observation and assessment; this promotes her continued development. The childminder identifies a child's need for extra support early in the care and shares information with parents to ensure that each child gets the support they need. The childminder has completed self-evaluation to assist her with development and seeks informal feedback from users. References from parents are positive and complimentary. The childminder carries out risk assessments which are thorough and cover both the home and outings to ensure that risks to children are assessed. However, there are items identified within the household that present a risk to children at this time.

The home and resources are very well organised to ensure that children are able to self-select materials and initiate learning. This is helped by a folder showing pictures and captions of all the available extra materials stored elsewhere from which children choose for subsequent days and which may be used by children with little verbal communication. Flexible routines encourage children to enjoy a range of activities within the home and regular exploration of the local community fosters an awareness of the immediate world around them. For instance, they visit the library for both book selection and activities, as well as play areas at Old Warden and the Butterfly Park at Bedford.

The childminder has formed firm relationships with parents to ensure that children's care is consistent. Verbal feedback is supplemented by a communication book for younger children and 'fliers' sent home with reminders about events taking place. Post-it notes and informal observations are taking place but are not recorded in progress journals and there is no starting point for development identified. This means that parents are not fully involved in their children's learning and development. Links with other settings providing for children are well established with a three-way communication book used to ensure that children are offered complementary learning experiences to foster all-round development.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are offered a wide range of activities that support them in making good progress in all areas of learning. The environment and accessible resources motivate children to explore. For instance, children's play with 'Happyland' village leads to making a roadway where they explore the straight and curved pieces, problem-solve to make tracks fit together and compare sizes. Themed activities are designed to support children's all-round development. For example, a dinosaur theme leads to exploring 'under the sea', and a trip on the bus used to explore timetables and public transport. Observation is completed informally but not yet used to inform progress journals and assessment, nor to inform the planning and the next steps in children's development. This means that children may not be

sufficiently challenged or supported to reach their full potential.

Children explore creativity and investigate the world around them as they hunt for bugs and spontaneously try to make an 'ant farm'. Children gain experiences such as handling live creatures during activities at the library, this has included snakes. They ask questions and take part in conversations gaining knowledge. For example, children question each other about family background asking where they were born. They recall events such as talking about parties they go to and events that happened when they went swimming with their families. They are clearly confident and secure in the care of the childminder and are listened to as they explore communication. They discuss foods from other countries and try curries, stir-fries and other foods from a children's cookbook. They have, however, had limited opportunities to fully explore other cultures, languages or ways of life and the wider world around them.

Children thrive because they are in a secure environment. They take part in routines that promote their safety, such as emergency evacuation, on a regular basis. They are gaining a very good understanding of caring for themselves. Children know that they have individual cups and older ones remind others to place open cups on top of the worktop to stop babies reaching them. They learn about road safety and 'stranger danger' through both project work and in everyday life. Children explain that they must walk, holds hands and wait for the green light at road crossings before going across. Children remind each other that placing boxes on their heads stops them from seeing and that they might fall over and hurt themselves. Children are learning to manage their own behaviour, they pass toys to each other freely, talk about who had items first and remind each other that it is kinder to share. They are clearly learning social skills that will equip them for their future life as well as promoting self-esteem.

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

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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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 the last inspection.

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.