

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY299968
Inspection date	21/04/2009
Inspector	Susan Tuffnell
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 2005. She lives with her husband and her daughter aged 18 in a residential area of St. Albans, Hertfordshire. The ground floor rooms and a bedroom and bathroom on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play. The premises are accessible by a low step to the entrance and there are steps down to the rear garden. The family has two cats, a hamster and fish.

The childminder provides care every weekday during term time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for three children in the early years age group and currently three children attend. The childminder currently does not provide care for any children on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (CCR) or the voluntary part of the Childcare Register (VCR). All the children share the same facilities.

The childminder holds the NVQ Level 3 qualification in childcare. She works in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder provides a safe and welcoming environment that supports children very well in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The close partnership with parents and well-planned activities contribute significantly to meeting individual children's needs. Children are highly valued at the setting because the childminder promotes diversity and equal opportunities through the careful planning of activities and resources. The self-evaluation process identifies some priorities for improvement to strive to provide the very best care and education for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that children's identified learning needs (the next steps) are carried forward and implemented into future planning to give a clear picture of progress.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder effectively manages the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. She demonstrates a positive attitude to continuous improvement through evaluating her practice and has started the self-evaluation process. The childminder continues to improve her understanding and practice and has attended

training to help children understand about health and physical development. Children are safeguarded because the childminder takes necessary steps to protect and promote their welfare through robust safeguarding procedures and effective policies. She has attended the Safeguarding Children Board training and the Advanced Child Protection training to enhance her knowledge.

The childminder provides an inclusive service that promotes children's welfare requirements well. She understands and engages in reflective practice, respecting diversity and valuing a child as a unique individual. Consequently, inclusive practice is promoted so that all children have their welfare requirements met very well. Parents and carers are involved as partners in promoting children's learning and development and are kept fully informed of their child's achievements through appropriate policies and procedures and the regular sharing of information. For example, parents comment positively about their child's care and education in recent questionnaires.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are supported very well as they access a good range of interesting and challenging play materials and equipment. Information is collected from parents about children's interests, needs and capabilities and the childminder uses this to inform initial assessments. Well-recorded observations are carried out regularly and link securely to the early learning goals. The next steps of learning are clearly identified on the observation sheets, however, they are not forwarded into future planning to show a clear picture of progress.

Excellent weekly planning incorporates the children's individual routines and a weekly theme. Interesting activities are arranged to extend children's experiences across the six areas of learning. For example, the celebration of Easter includes many imaginative art and craft activities and cooking. Children plant daffodils in pots as Mother's Day gifts and grow herbs and potatoes in the garden to harvest and eat. They are offered a balanced range of activities and are encouraged to make choices and instigate play opportunities. Children are sociable and friendly and include others in their play. They demonstrate how the wheels work on the toy bus, share the resources and play well together. Children watch each other closely and copy gestures and words. For example, when one child sings and dances spontaneously, other children join in enthusiastically. Children's language development is continually encouraged by the childminder through open-ended questions to promote a response. She speaks to the children clearly and they repeat words and short sentences. Children name resources as they play and are encouraged to identify colours and shapes and to count objects. Children show interest in technology as they watch the computer screen and attempt to make marks pressing the keyboard. Electronic toys help the children's coordination as they tap the keys to make sounds and music. Children show very good concentration as they post shapes in the correct holes and attempt to name them. Effective support from the childminder enables children to persevere at activities. Children's art folder includes examples of their art and craft work and wonderful photographs of the children participating in an imaginative range of activities are available to parents. Children explore the natural world with walks in the

countryside to collect leaves and sticks and make collage. Children begin to understand about life cycles as they dig holes for plants and seeds in the garden and help to care for them. Topics are planned to celebrate familiar and unfamiliar festivals and children have access to play materials that depict positive images of the wider world.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment because the childminder ensures that all areas are checked before children arrive at the premises. Extensive risk assessments clearly identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and attention to health and safety is excellent with daily safety checks carried out to ensure a consistent approach of minimising risk to children. Children learn about their own safety and the safety of others as they practise road awareness when out walking and adhere to safety rules inside and outside the house. Children are offered a healthy diet and their growth and development is promoted through a good menu and regular fresh air and exercise.

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?	3
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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