

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY317099
Inspection date	22/06/2009
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 their two children aged four and two years in a residential area of St. Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding purposes and a first floor bedroom is used for children to rest. There is a fully enclosed secure rear garden for outside play. The premises are accessible by a low step to the front entrance.

The childminder provides care every weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered to care for one child on the Early Years Register and currently one child attends. The childminder currently provides care for one child on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (CCR) and no children attend on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register (VCR). All the children share the same facilities.

The childminder works in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals and holds the National Nursery Examination Board (NNEB) qualification in childcare.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding and the childminder provides an excellent service for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are supported effectively as they benefit from the well-planned and imaginative activities. The close partnership with parents contributes significantly to ensuring that the individual needs of all the children are met. Children are highly valued at the setting because the childminder has a clear understanding of diversity and equal opportunities, which she uses effectively, to ensure activities and equipment promote a positive awareness of the wider world. The childminder uses effective procedures for evaluating her practice and has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses. Priorities for improvement in her self-evaluation show that she continuously strives 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 high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensuring that children's identified learning needs (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 uses her knowledge and experience to ensure that all aspects of the provision are managed extremely well. Excellent implementation of high quality policies, procedures and records support the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensure that the needs of all the children are met. Detailed information is collected from extensive observations to evaluate the impact of the educational programme on each individual child. Imaginative and flexible planning ensures that each child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience across all the areas of learning and is securely linked to the early learning goals. Children's development needs are identified as the next steps of their learning. However, they are not carried forward securely into future planning to give a clear picture of progress.

The childminder shows a genuine desire to promote the best care and opportunities for children. Her exceptional work in forging effective partnerships with parents and schools ensures that children's care is consistent and they are able to make very good progress. Parents greatly appreciate the close links encouraged by the childminder and are well informed about their child's education and care. The childminder's excellent safeguarding policies include comprehensive risk assessments to ensure that children are protected.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder has created an outstanding environment for the children. Stimulating and interesting activities enhance their development and support them in making excellent progress. The flexible approach to planning ensures that children's uniqueness is valued and their interests and needs are always included. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the learning process which is clearly reflected with detailed observations and assessments. Children's self-confidence and independence is actively encouraged as they lead and follow their own interests. For example, children choose to play in the garden, they carefully balance small quoits on their heads and then roll them along the ground. Their physical development is encouraged through climbing, balancing and jumping on challenging equipment, pedalling small bikes and exploring sand and water play. Children learn to play co-operatively together, share and wait for their turn as they join in with a listening and matching game. Picture cards are spread out on the floor and children listen to taped music of popular children's programmes. They successfully match the sound with the picture on the card and answer questions about the character. Children are encouraged to count their cards at the end of the game to identify the winner. Excellent attention is given to children's individual achievements and progress and activities are introduced to challenge their learning. For example, children skills are encouraged with more complex puzzles. Wonderful examples of children's creative development adorn the walls. Their personal social and emotional development is fostered extremely well with sensitive activities. For example, children interpret their feelings by creating happy, angry, sleepy and sad faces on paper plates. An attractive display of art and craft work show the children's interpretation of their family portraits and super pictures of their homes. Children's individual scrapbooks show an extensive variety of

drawings, paintings and craft work and the use of many different techniques such as finger painting, bubble painting, printing and collage. Children investigate the nature world as they study the spiders they catch and stretch wool over printed lines to form webs on paper. They enjoy talking about and identifying the different birds in the garden and like to watch bees on the flowers. Sunflower seeds, peas, tomatoes and herbs are planted and tended by the children and walks in the local environment to look at the different trees and leaves helps raise their awareness of the changing seasons.

The inspirational environment and quality resources promote children's progression towards the early learning goals. An abundance of play materials are stored in low shelves and baskets and are freely available to children. The bright and stimulating play area is decorated with attractive examples of children's art and craft work. Children are positively encouraged to be active in their learning and are provided with a language rich environment. An excellent range of quality books are freely available and include stories and information to raise children's awareness and understanding about the wider world. Young children benefit greatly from the childminder's excellent understanding of early language and communication. They are encouraged to express their wants and desires verbally and with positive body language. Children are very happy and settled. They thrive in an environment where the consistent support encourages them to express their ideas and explore and investigate. Children are fully involved in the routines of the setting. As they help lay the table for snack they identify the different coloured plates and talk about the shapes and colours they see around them. Food is attractively displayed for the children and arranged in a way to encourage them to self-serve.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of this area. Young children are beginning to understand about taking care of themselves and others as they practise regular fire drills and learn about road safety. The childminder has a clear understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children and has ensured that she has relevant information and contact details. She has recently completed training in this area to further enhance her knowledge and understanding.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
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?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

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?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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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