

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY376334
Inspection date	17/12/2008
Inspector	Paula Jane Hayhow
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 2008. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and 10 years in Pirton, near Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house, except for the major bedroom, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's house is via a step. The family has five cats and two rabbits as pets.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered to provide three places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and there are currently five children attending who are within this age group. The children live locally. All children attend other settings such as the local primary school.

The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to eight years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the Early Years age range. There is currently one child on roll in this age range.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the childminder makes generally good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The environment is secure and welcoming and children are offered encouraging support to enable them to participate fully in all the activities and play opportunities provided. There is an effective working partnership with parents which ensures that they are kept informed of their children's care and learning. The childminder's informal and flexible approach to planning ensures that all children's interests and needs are routinely included. Generally good procedures for evaluating her practice mean that she has a sound picture of her strengths and weaknesses which enables her to plan changes which lead to improvements in the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- devise systems to gain an initial and ongoing overview of children's progress to ensure that all areas of learning are covered in the planning of activities and play opportunities
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing undertaken, reviewing it before embarking on each outing
- ensure that hazards to children, both indoors and outside, are kept to a minimum; this refers to the toilet block, ranch style landing banister and

sprays in the bathroom.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has formed sound relationships with parents which influences the children's care and learning and ensures that it is consistent and that they all make good progress. She organises this through daily dialogue and a three monthly parent review meeting. Settling-in assessments and daily discussions are carried out with parents, but these are not detailed enough to be used as a base for developing the planning of children's activities in the initial stages or on an ongoing basis. Her contacts with the local school are very good as she works there during the day and uses the school letters documenting their termly themes and timetable to influence her play plans. The childminder's home and resources are well organised which ensures that all children are able to self-select materials and initiate their own learning. For example, play materials are routinely rotated and kept on low shelves for easy access and there is sufficient space for free floor play. The childminder ensures the children have opportunities which include a varied range of activities in the home and activities to develop their knowledge of the local community such as visits to the park, shops, firework display or joining in with the pumpkin growing competition.

The childminder has some good procedures for evaluating her practice. She has developed a comprehensive risk assessment with issues clearly actioned such as safeguarding children around the Christmas tree and she checks the premises daily for any hazards before the children arrive. However, the childminder has not yet addressed the risks relating to outings fully and this means that children's well-being is not fully assured. The childminder is committed to ensuring that her service is inclusive for all families and offers introductory visits to ensure that children feel secure and settled within her care. Clear records, policies and procedures are used generally well to promote the welfare of children and appropriate safeguarding policies ensure that children are protected at all times. These are routinely shared and signed up to by parents. The childminder has effective procedures for evaluating her practice, informally reviewing her daily work to identify areas for improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with ample opportunities to enable them to make good progress in all areas of learning and development. The childminder is encouraging making sure that each child in her care is offered a stimulating and interesting learning experience. She praises them for their accomplishments such as completing their new reading book and helps them to develop their understanding further through discussion. For example, they talk about what they have read and discuss what a survival kit should have and how these can be used. As the childminder knows the children well she is able to meet their individual needs through identifying areas requiring further development such as spelling, throwing and catching balls and colouring in carefully. Children are becoming competent with technology because the childminder fosters this with use of the programmable

games and other everyday technology such as using scales to measure the ingredients when cooking and mixing coloured icing to decorate their cakes. They enjoy alphabet puzzles recognising the letters and writing them in the air showing each other those ones which start their name. The childminder informally notes what children are doing and this is generally used to influence future planning.

The informal and flexible planning ensures that children are offered a good range of activities and confidently enjoy their environment. The environment is set up invitingly with designated areas for craft, sitting quietly and floor play. Children enjoy turn taking with resources as well as board games and are polite and caring towards each other. They gain appropriate life skills and independence through managing their own care such as packing toys away, hanging their coats up and washing their hands at appropriate times. The childminder encourages their understanding of the importance of this and the need for physical exercise through discussion and clear explanations. They have opportunities to visit the park to use the climbing apparatus, slide, swings and gain co-ordination skill when practising football. Manipulative skills are routinely encouraged at craft time such as using scissors to cut and follow wiggly lines.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and secure environment. Children take part in routines that promote their understanding of safety such as regular fire drills, discussions relating to stranger danger and practise road safety on their walks in the community. The childminder conducts daily checks of the home but some hazards are not routinely checked which could affect the children's safety. Children are well nourished as the childminder supplies wholesome meals using fresh ingredients low in salt and fat. The childminder has a clear understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children and has ensured that she has all relevant detail in place should she have a concern.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
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?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

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?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
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?	3
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 registration.

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.