

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY378998
Inspection date	25/03/2009
Inspector	Karen Molloy
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 2008. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and two years in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. The whole of the downstairs is used for childminding purposes and an upstairs bedroom is used for children requiring undisturbed sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a pet kitten.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and the voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for four children, all on a part-time basis, in this age group. The childminder attends a local toddler group and childminding support group. 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 offers a welcoming provision where children enjoy a variety of enjoyable and interesting learning experiences. Children in this setting make good progress in their play and learning. Emphasis is placed on children's safety and well-being and the childminder forms good relationships with parents, to ensure individual needs are effectively met. Comprehensive policies and procedures reflect the practice and support children's welfare and development. The childminder has good monitoring systems in place; she is beginning to self-evaluate her practice and seeks parents feedback, to help identify areas for development and improve 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:

- develop assessment further to enable parents to contribute to the process; this refers to information gathered from parents about children's development.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, care and safety is promoted through the childminder's secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop. She has previous experience working with autistic children and as a nanny and brings this additional knowledge to her role as a childminder. The childminder creates a safe and welcoming environment where children's independence is actively encouraged, for example, children have easy access to a variety of resources and play materials stored at low level, enabling them to make their own choices. Toys are labelled both in text form and illustrated; this challenges older or more able children and

equally supports younger children. Resources that positively reflect diversity and inclusion, such as puzzles, small world play and dressing up clothes are easily accessible and well used. The childminder builds close relationships with parents and keeps them very well-informed. All parents are given a copy of the childminder's policies and procedures, which details the service she provides. Parents are kept up-to-date about their children's activities and progress through regular discussions, informative diaries and individual learning journey's. The childminder has begun to make links with the local school and nursery and if children show an interest in a particular toy or activity from one setting, she extends this to her childminding setting, to support their learning.

Children are effectively safeguarded by the measures that the childminder has in place. Her knowledge and understanding of what to do if she has concerns about a child is sufficient to protect children and she has the appropriate literature to support this. The childminder's practice is effective in keeping children safe and managing their health needs. For example, she promotes their understanding of their own safety as she talks to them about using equipment safely, reads books about 'stranger danger' and establishes sensible rules of behaviour to keep them safe. Suitable safety equipment is fitted around the home to support children's safety. Risk assessments and checklists are in place and ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that hazards to children both indoors and outside are minimised.

Records, policies and procedures are very well-maintained and underpin the smooth day-to-day management of the provision. The childminder has robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision, which ensures that areas for development are identified and improvements made when necessary. For example, she actively seeks parents comments through questionnaires, thereby valuing their input. Parents feedback is positive and they are very happy with the service they receive.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder provides a warm and welcoming play environment where children are settled, have fun and feel comfortable within their surroundings. Space and resources are well-organised to enable them to make independent choices from a range of toys and resources that promote all aspects of their early learning skills. Consequently, children participate enthusiastically in a variety of interesting and age-appropriate learning opportunities, both indoors and out of the childminder's home, with a mix of self-chosen and adult-led activities. The childminder has developed good systems for planning, observation and assessment. Planning covers all areas of learning and is flexible to enable the activities or routine to be led by the children's mood or interest, thereby meeting their individual needs. Individual learning journeys are in place, which are personalised by the children and full of informative photographs, observations and examples of the their work. These are used to help the childminder plan for the children's next step and are readily available the parents on a daily basis, to ensure they are well-informed. Information is obtained from parents about children's general welfare, although the childminder is less well- informed about their development when they first

start. Gathering this information will provide additional opportunities for parents to work in partnership, to support children's learning.

Children are supported well; the childminder joins in their play and interacts with them through purposeful conversation. Children's language and communication skills is fostered as she asks questions to develop their thinking, listens to their comments and ideas and encourages their interest in books. Babies show enjoyment as they sit in a ring, absorbed in a book and making sounds, enthusiastically. Children develop social skills as they regularly visit toddler and childminding groups, they are encouraged to take turns and to share. They develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world. During a 'Spring' theme, activities are challenging and interesting for older children and adapted for very young children, with a Spring treasure basket introduced, enabling everyone to be included. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is increasing as they grow sunflowers and care for frog spawn. Children are encouraged to respect and value each other and are encouraged to ask questions about similarities and differences, which is responded to positively by the childminder. This means that children are enjoying and achieving well and developing good skills for the future.

Children's welfare and general well-being is promoted. They learn to keep themselves safe through discussions and everyday practice, such as when they are out walking or using scissors. Good hygiene and personal care is fostered through everyday practice; children are reminded to wash their hands and posters in the bathroom remind and support good hygiene practices. Babies routines are acknowledged and adhered to and they are given appropriate comfort and attention to support their welfare and development. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks, with drinks readily accessible. Any specific dietary requirements are discussed with parents and recorded. Children benefit from daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, as they use the childminder's garden, visit local parks and collect leaves on a nature walk.

Children behave well as consistent strategies are used to help them co-operate and behave appropriately. Positive role models and plenty of one to one attention ensure children are busy and absorbed, to prevent any challenging behaviour. Children are given much encouragement and praise to promote their confidence and 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

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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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