

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY382687
Inspection date	17/03/2009
Inspector	Kay Williams
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 two and five years. They live in St Albans in Hertfordshire. The downstairs area of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding two children under five.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local toddler groups and takes children to the library and the park. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. The childminder has good detailed knowledge of all children's individual needs, consequently their welfare and learning is successfully promoted. The newly registered childminder implements an effective self-evaluation process, which clearly identifies areas for development which she makes arrangements to act upon. This effectively supports her capacity to sustain continuous improvement in the service that she provides.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- offer babies more opportunities to explore a wide range of different textures including natural materials
- extend the system for recording child observations by covering all six areas of learning

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has developed a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this effectively underpins her existing good practice. The childminder is very well organised. She has developed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which serve as supportive working documents. For example, the settling in procedure accounts for all children's unique individual needs and a settling in programme is established in partnership with parents. The childminder has completed all of the mandatory training and is committed to developing the effectiveness of her service through ongoing self-evaluation. As a

result of this process, the childminder is seeking to extend the range of social and cultural diversity within the resources that the children play with.

Children are effectively safeguarded because the childminder provides a safe environment which is free from hazards. She regularly risk assesses all relevant areas of her home and the venues that the children visit on outings. The childminder has completed training relating to child protection issues and has sound knowledge of the correct procedures to follow should she become concerned that a child in her care was suffering from harm. She ensures that all household members have undertaken the relevant checks and visitors to the home are monitored.

Children benefit from the effective partnerships that the childminder has established with their parents. This effectively supports their continuity of care and forges strong links between home and the childminder. For example, as part of their birthday celebration children made their cake at home and decorated at the childminder's. Parents are offered good quality information for their reference, this is presented in the childminder's portfolio and displayed on the notice boards. Daily diaries and the children's learning journals keep parents well informed regarding their children's progress.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are making good progress in all areas of their learning because the childminder spends a good amount of time supporting their learning. She works effectively with parents to establish children's starting points and ongoing observations support her to plan for the next steps in their learning. For example, as children develop competence in mark making skills, they are offered a greater variety of pencils, brushes, and paper to experiment with. However, the observations do not consistently reflect all areas of learning, which could result in missed opportunities. Children are developing a strong sense of independence in their learning as they choose where to play and what to play with. Planned activities are flexible and supportive of the children's learning needs. For example, the opportunity to enjoy some Irish dancing was rescheduled in order to accommodate a longer period of outdoor play. Consequently, children enjoyed additional opportunities such as mixing mud and water and constructing a tent.

Children's welfare and well-being is promoted to good effect. They benefit from regular opportunities to play and exercise in the fresh air. They learn to make healthy choices as they enjoy a nutritional morning snack of soda bread and apricots. Their individual dietary needs are catered for and babies are fed in a relaxed situation which allows for plenty of opportunity for cuddles and individual attention. Children are protected from the risk of cross infection as they wash their hands before food and use their own personal towels to dry their hands on. They talk about the importance of hand washing and how germs can make people ill. Baby toys are cleaned regularly in order to ensure that they are clean for babies to put in their mouths.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that effectively engage and sustain their

interests. They enthusiastically water the plants in the garden as the childminder encourages them to think about what make seeds grow. Babies are becoming increasingly mobile as they are encouraged to roll and reach for toys. Musical toys and rattles provide good exploratory experiences of sound, however, most of the baby toys are plastic and do not offer the experience or properties of different textures.

Children are very well behaved. They are learning to take responsibility for their own actions and are well supported to discuss and learn from the occasions when their self control breaks down. This effectively teaches them to share fairly and to learn to take turns. The childminder creates a warm, calm atmosphere and the children enjoy a good sense of fun. They laugh as they dance and sing to music, especially enjoying familiar actions rhymes such as the 'Dingle dangle scarecrow'. Children are encouraged to use their voices to communicate, consequently they are confident communicators. They are learning that written text has meaning as they plot their day, sticking name cards to the photographs of the venues that they visit.

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 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.