

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY388196
Inspection date	09/07/2009
Inspector	Margaret Patricia Mellor
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 2009. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and eight years old, in Birkenhead. Children use the whole of the ground floor and two bedrooms of the childminder's home for their care, play and learning. There is a secure, fully enclosed paved area for children's outdoor activities. The family have goldfish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years old. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks or drives to collect children from school and take them to local toddler groups or places of interest. She has an early years qualification to level 3. She receives support from the local authority, and is a member of the National Childminder's Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children are cared for in a welcoming family home, and happily play in a stimulating and supportive environment. They are safe and secure at all times, and the childminder has a well developed knowledge of each child's individual needs. Children enjoy learning about their local area, and well planned activities help them make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Partnerships with parents is a key strength, and contributes significantly to meeting children's individual needs and creating an inclusive atmosphere. The childminder demonstrates a genuine commitment to continuous quality improvement. She has addressed safety issues discussed at the registration visit, and is being to reflect on her practice to identify strengths of her provision and areas for future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the assessment arrangements for each child
- build upon the resources that promote children's awareness of diversity in the wider community
- take steps to improve the procedures to inform self-evaluation.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder manages her provision well, and takes all necessary steps to ensure that children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded. She is aware of her

responsibilities in the area of child protection, and risk assessments of the premises, toys and outings are robust. Good hygiene practices vigilantly followed by the childminder and the provision individual towels helps to minimise the risk of cross infection. Children enjoy a well balanced diet with meals and snacks freshly prepared by the childminder, and fresh fruit and vegetables are offered daily. They learn about a healthy lifestyle through their daily routine and regular physical exercise. Well written policies are communicated to parents, and good procedures for sharing information about dietary needs ensures children remain healthy. Good organisation of the regulatory documentation, such as, accident records also contribute to the safe management of the provision and children's welfare.

Successful partnerships with parents, and becoming familiar with each child's needs, and their starting points is part of the settling in procedures. This helps the childminder to recognise and support each child's unique qualities and individual needs. As a result all children are included and happily engaged in their play. Ongoing sharing of information is good, for example, daily record sheets to take home and access to their child's learning journal. Parents speak positively about the care provided through questionnaires, with comments, such as, 'Excellent care', and 'Stimulating activities children enjoy'. They are keen support their children's learning about animals with visits to a Safari park, for instance. Important links are also developing with the local playgroup, and a shared diary significantly contributes to children's learning between provisions.

The childminder has a very good understanding of child development and how children learn through play. Activities are planned around children's developmental needs and interests, and the environment is organised to create an inviting and welcoming environment for them. The childminder is very keen to promote better outcomes for children. For example, since registration she has improved safety by replacing the bath panel, and future improvements include accessing training to extend her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She is beginning to consider the views of parents in self evaluation, and recognises that the more formal procedures for evaluating the quality of the provision offered are not yet fully developed.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children happily engage in their play and are making good progress in their learning and development in a caring environment. Displaying animal masks they make and photographs of their visit to the zoo helps children feel that they belong. Children grow in confidence as they form close relationships with the childminder, who enthusiastically motivates and supports their play. For instance, she sits, talks and listens to the children, which motivates and stimulates their conversation and learning. Planning includes topics and provides a good balance of child initiated and adult led activities, with emphasis on enjoyment and involving the children's interests. Observation linked to the areas of learning, photographs, work products and on going discussions with parents and playgroup are used to plan for children's next steps in learning and achieving. Each child has a learning journal where information is recorded, but the systems to record children's progress toward the early learning goals have not yet been fully implemented.

The childminder is very good at making children feel valued, for example, she makes allowances for their different personalities, reflected in children's happiness and confidence. Her kind words of praise and encouragement helps children learn what they tried and done well. Children share the toys, enjoy playing together and follow simple instructions, such as, tidying away toys. Regular visits to the local toddler group also provide worthwhile occasions for children to socialise with others. Children learn that the seeds they plant need soil, water and sun to grow, and about their local area with visits to the park, library or zoo, which are enjoyed by all. They begin to develop respect for others as they play with different ethnic dolls and small world in wheelchairs. Children's awareness of the wider community, however, is not fully promoted because resources reflecting positive images of diversity are not yet broadly incorporated into the range of books or puzzles.

Children move freely and with confidence in the childminder's home. All the necessary safety equipment is in place to minimise hazards, and the outdoor area provides a variety of safe challenges for them. The childminder helps children become aware of keeping themselves safe when practicing fire evacuation and crossing roads, for instance. Meal times are a very social occasion where good manners are encouraged, and exploring different tastes and textures nurtures children's awareness of healthy eating. Children develop very good levels of independence given their age and stage of development. They help themselves to drinks when thirsty, take pleasure in personal hygiene when washing their hands, and self select resources that interest them from the toy boxes at child height. Playing in the fresh air, peddling wheeled toys, climbing steps and moving like animals they see at the zoo also promotes their physical development.

Good opportunities are provided to promote children's creative development. They build up a repertoire of rhymes, explore musical instruments, sand, water, and paint, and role-play helps them make sense of the world. The childminder supports children's interest in books particularly well, encouraging their participation when reading and sharing books with them. Children consistently count and recognise numerals to 10, and begin to use simple calculation in their daily routines. They have plenty of fun learning about shape, colour and pattern as they make tiger and leopard masks with card and lollipop sticks. Children begin to make connections through experiences when playing simple computer games, and in the community extend their awareness of technology through the 'green man' when crossing roads. Number rhymes and free access to mark-making resources, a printer and cash register also contributes to children's future skills.

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.	3

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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