

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY393185
Inspection date	08/12/2009
Inspector	Susan Ennis
Type of setting	Childminder

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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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 2009. She lives with her husband and three children aged 19 months, 11 years and 15 years old in a village near Bedford in Bedfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There is level access to the premises. The family has one dog and one rabbit.

The childminder provides care on each weekday term time and during school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of two children in the early years age group and is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently no children on roll in this age group. Children on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register share the same facilities as those on the Early Years Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder offers a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which all children thrive. Her flexible planning ensures that the children's interests and development are consistently promoted and that they enjoy their time with her. She builds trusting and professional relationships with parents to ensure that all children's individual needs are met. Through monitoring her practice, the childminder has a clear picture of her strengths and areas for improvement. She is, therefore, able to make effective changes to improve the daily care and experiences for the children in her care. She demonstrates a high commitment to her childminding and is enthusiastic about making and sustaining improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning and assessment procedures to include a more thorough initial assessment of each child, to more clearly demonstrate their progress towards the early learning goals and to show how their next steps are fed into the overall planning
- ensure that all policies and procedures are written relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding policies and procedures ensure that children are well protected at all times. For example, the childminder has a good knowledge of child

protection, having attended additional training to update her knowledge and has the required contact numbers in place for dealing with concerns. She also ensures that anyone coming into contact with the children is suitable to do so and does not leave them unattended with anyone. She uses clear and practical procedures, such as daily safety checks and concise risk assessments for monitoring the environment, meaning that hazards are minimised and children can move around the setting freely and with confidence. Good daily practice and ongoing explanations from the childminder help children build up their own understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are encouraged to climb up the slide the right way and are reminded not to walk on the garden decking in case they slip.

The childminder has a good understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, enabling her to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. She works with the parents to ensure that she understands each child's background, needs and beliefs. Children are gently encouraged to recognise differences and respect diversity. Their sense of belonging and self-esteem are promoted as they are encouraged to say what activities they would like to do with the childminder meeting these requests by, for example, getting the tent out when it is asked for. Children are learning about the diverse world in which we live through, for example, playing with dolls, dressing up clothes, play food and figures reflecting positive images.

Children's individual development is well promoted because the childminder has effective procedures and resources in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. The available resources are used well and the all-inclusive, child friendly environment is conducive to their learning. For example, low level storage enables the children to freely choose which toys to play with and clear floor space enables them to play comfortably. The childminder continuously evaluates her daily practice and regularly changes procedures to improve her practice. For example, she recently recorded the items in the first aid box and their expiry dates so that any items needing to be renewed are easily highlighted. She demonstrates a genuine enjoyment of her work and regularly attends further training to update her childcare knowledge. She uses parent questionnaires and action plans to identify her strengths and areas for improvement and is committed to sustainability and improving the outcomes for children in her care.

A professional and trusting partnership with parents and carers ensures that all relevant information is shared and a consistent approach given. Daily interaction, a parent notice board, text messages and use of a daily diary ensure that they are fully informed about their child's day. There is also a photo album for each child capturing their participation in a variety of enjoyable activities. Organised documentation ensures that parents are fully informed about the childminder's policies and procedures detailing her working ethos and good practice. However, as some have not been updated to incorporate the Early Years Foundation Stage parents could be misled when reading or referring to them.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are consistently offered a wide range of opportunities that support them in making good progress across the areas of learning and development. The childminder has a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and has developed procedures for observing and assessing the children as they play. She uses this information to record their next steps and plan their individual progress. However, as limited information is gained about their initial starting points and current procedures do not clearly show where children are in their development or how their next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning, their development is not optimally promoted.

The childminder's flexible approach to planning ensures that children's likes and dislikes are responded to and their ideas valued. For example, when children make pretend cakes with the play dough, the childminder further stimulates their interest by baking real cakes. Children develop their number skills as they weigh and measure the ingredients and their knowledge and understanding of the world as they watch how the mixture changes when cooked. They later use their recall skills as they tell the inspector that 'We made cakes. We stirred the eggs.' Their creative skills are encouraged as they sing favourite songs such as 'Row, row, row the boat' and 'I hear thunder' whilst the childminder extends their language skills by asking them to shake their instruments quietly and loud. They enjoy playing in the garden developing their physical skills by making snowmen in the sand and throwing and catching the ball. They also develop their listening skills as they listen to and discuss the birds they can hear and the change in noise level when a helicopter passes by.

Children's emotional development is well promoted as they develop trusting relationships with each other and the childminder, for example, falling asleep in her arms when they feel tired. The childminder adapts the activities to ensure that all children are included. Whilst telling the Christmas story children are asked to fetch the corresponding figures from the stable. Younger children are given more recognisable characters to look for whilst older children are asked to look at the comparisons with those on the page. Consistent boundaries and ongoing explanations help the children understand appropriate behaviour, such as sharing the toys and taking turns. The childminder, who acts as a positive role model, fully supports them in finding strategies that encourage them to make the right choices.

Children's health and welfare is actively promoted as the childminder takes steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle. For example, the childminder wears gloves to change nappies and children are reminded to use soap to clean their hands after using the toilet. Children are encouraged to eat healthily as they are provided with a variety of home cooked meals and snacks. They are also encouraged to experience tasting different foods for which they receive a certificate saying 'I tried a new food today'.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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