

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	224012
Inspection date	11/02/2009
Inspector	Donna Stevens
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 1982. She lives with her husband and adult son in a house in Bridgnorth, close to local shops, parks and schools. The childminder has three registered assistants, one of whom is her husband, and all of whom work part-time. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time when working alone and 12 children when working with one of her assistants. She is currently caring for eight children within the early years age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes and collects children from the local school and attends several toddler groups on a regular basis. She supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Shropshire Childminding Network.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder works closely with parents, carers, her assistants and staff at other settings to ensure that her practice is fully inclusive and each child's individual needs, likes, dislikes and interests are included in their daily activities. The children are very well cared for, happy and thoroughly enjoy the exciting and purposeful range of high-quality activities that support their learning and development extremely well. The childminder constantly reviews the provision and consults with parents and children to provide a service that is responsive to the needs of its users. Completing the Ofsted self-evaluation process has allowed her to look closely and make minor adjustments to her high-quality practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improve record keeping further in order to more clearly show who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The children benefit from the childminder's many years of experience and her positive attitude to training and embracing change. She has welcomed the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as an opportunity to build

on the extensive range of activities and opportunities currently enjoyed by the children. Effective use of self-evaluation will allow her to continue to maintain high quality care.

Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent and highly valued by the childminder. They are kept constantly informed about their child's day through informal discussions at both ends of the day and the use of daily diaries. The childminder has kept photo journals of the children for some time and has now expanded these to include information on the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are available to parents at all times. Parents are also supplied with a wealth of information about the setting as well as the welfare and learning and development requirements of the new framework. This allows parents to be fully involved in all aspects of their children's care and progress. Over time the childminder has developed close links with the local school and preschool which enables her to work with children's other carers to ensure that their individual needs are very well met.

Children's welfare is very well safeguarded as the childminder works with her assistants to ensure that her home remains safe, suitable and child friendly. Robust risk assessments both at home and for outings are carried out regularly. Additional risk assessments for impromptu events and potentially dangerous situations are carried out prior to children taking part in activities. For example, following the recent snowfall the childminder carried out a full risk assessment before taking children outside to enjoy this rare event. The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection issues, regularly attends training in this area and has a clear safeguarding policy in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance that is signed by all parents so they are clear that the childminder's prime responsibility is to the children in her care.

The childminder has developed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which reflect the high quality care provided. These are made available to parents so they have a clear understanding of the expectations of the children, themselves and the minder. Documentation is extremely well organised and maintained to a very high standard. Information from the parents with regards to who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility is obtained and any issues are recorded. The childminder now plans to record this information more clearly for each child.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make extremely good progress towards the early learning goals and in all areas of their development. They are provided with extensive opportunities to enjoy a well-balanced selection of activities both in and out of the home. The childminder is skilled at observing children's play, identifying areas of particular interest and looking at how these can be expanded to support individual learning and development. For example, a child who particularly enjoyed playing in the water filling and pouring from different containers was then offered a variety of different media to repeat the same experience including sand, gloop and jelly. Another child who showed a particular interest in animals enjoyed a group trip to

the pet shop to meet some of the animals there. All the children benefit from these opportunities and identifying particular children's interests helps them to feel settled and secure and to become confident and independent learners.

The childminder provides a good mix of structured adult-led activities and time for child-initiated play. She also makes use of spontaneous events for example, a sighting of the air ambulance on the walk back from toddlers led to a game of accidents, rescues and hospitals and children's learning was further extended through discussions about road safety and people who help us. Following the recent snowfall children enjoyed playing in the garden, building snowmen and using adult size spades to dig and move piles of snow. Plastic trays of snow were then brought into the playroom so the children could re-enact cars becoming stuck and to explore the properties of snow including tasting it! These wonderful opportunities allow children to explore their environment, learn about the world around them and develop their imaginations and creativity through real life experiences and events.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their skills in communication, literacy, numeracy and problem solving. The childminder extends the children's vocabulary as she asks them questions and engages them in conversation during their play. They are confident and articulate and offer their suggestions and opinions with enthusiasm. Weekly visits to the library and a good selection of books in the home allow children to develop a love of stories and an appreciation for written words. They begin to learn simple mathematical concepts as they discover shape and patterns through their play and sing number rhymes and songs. They help weigh and measure during cooking activities and explore size and volume as they use different sized containers with natural materials such as sand and water. They spend part of each day outside in the garden playing with a full range of toys and activities and learning about the nature around them, for example, playing in fallen leaves during the autumn. A wide selection of equipment is stored in low-level storage boxes, allowing children to select their own toys and activities, increasing their independence and decision-making skills. Opportunities to socialise, join in with group activities and explore different equipment on activities are provided through regular visits to toddler group several times a week.

The childminder places a high priority on teaching the children to keep themselves safe. Regular events such as practising the fire drill and crossing the road safely begin to make children aware of the dangers around them. Living in a riverside town the childminder provides opportunities for the children to learn to keep themselves safe by the water through walks along the river and fishing trips. Excellent strategies are supporting positive behaviour are displayed by the children who show a deep respect for their carers, each other and the home, toys and equipment that they use. The childminder is skilled at channelling children's interests and energy to avoid conflict and confrontation while still encouraging them to learn to share and take turns. She places a high emphasis on good manners, caring for others, particularly those younger than themselves and developing a sense of responsibility and playing an active part in the local community. For example, during the recent bad weather children helped to get shopping for some of the older residents in the street. Children's good health is promoted as stringent procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection

and encourage children to develop good hygiene habits at meal times and when using the toilet. Healthy eating is encouraged and children enjoy visits to the local shops to choose fruit for food tasting sessions.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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

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 the last inspection.

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.