

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	222803
Inspection date	24/10/2008
Inspector	Heidi Falconer

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 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 1998. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 18 and 13 in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. This includes a small downstairs toilet. Access to the house is gained through gentle slopes at the front and back entrances.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children when working on her own and a total of 12 children when she is working with another childminder at any one time. She is currently minding children in the early years age group and children older than the early years age group. She is registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to local pre-schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends the local parent and toddler group with minded children.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The childminder works with her husband and together they have high expectations of all children and are exceptionally committed to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential. Together they have established and continue to sustain an extremely stimulating and safe environment where children make excellent progress in their learning. Children relish their time at the childminder's house and have established close bonds with both childminders. The childminder is highly reflective and evaluates the impact of her practice, modifying her approach where necessary and attending additional training. Inclusive practice is promoted extremely well as the childminder overcomes barriers to ensure that all children at the setting are treated with equal concern.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide further opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder works with her husband and together they both have a strong influence over the setting's policies and procedures sharing collective responsibility for their implementation. For example, together they have recently written a 'guns and weapons policy' as this is a topical issue. When deciding on the contents of this policy they worked closely with staff at the local children's centre, where many of the children attend, to ensure consistency in their approach.

The childminder is very committed to improving her practice and the provision for the children who attend. She continually attends many courses such as food safety and nutrition and menu planning. After each course the childminder uses the knowledge that she has gained to identify priority areas for action. For example, after attending the food safety training the childminder removed all hand towels and replaced these with disposable paper towels to maintain children's good health. Self-evaluation is very good and generates valid and reliable evidence which contributes significantly to procedures for assuring quality. For example, she is currently reviewing more ways in which she can promote linguistic diversity and extend opportunities for children to use their first language in their play and learning.

The childminder demonstrates that she is able to respond quickly and take necessary steps to safeguard and promote children's welfare. There is a detailed written child protection policy and the childminder has basic and advanced level training in child protection. She is able to recognise the signs and symptoms of actual or potential harm and abuse in children and she knows how and when to act to safeguard children.

The childminder works in very close partnership with parents and carers as a routine part of her practice. Parents are involved in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the setting through questionnaires and they are also invited to add their suggestions to new policies and procedures. For example, parents have recently helped to devise the setting's menu, based on healthy eating and what foods their children enjoy. The childminder establishes strong links with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, she gathers information about the topics they will be covering each term so that she can plan activities which compliment and extend the children's learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The exceptional organisation of the educational programme ensures that all children at the setting make excellent progress. Children are provided with a varied and exciting range of experiences which enrich their overall development. The setting is extremely well set out and resourced to enable the children to select activities and pursue their own interests in sustained play. Children thoroughly enjoy the role play area. They select dressing-up clothes and accessories as they develop their own game of 'doctors', collecting dolls and bears from other areas to be the 'patients'. As they play they receive high levels of support from the childminder who encourages them to think. For example, the childminder uses laminated 'patient cards' to help children understand that print carries meaning by talking to them about the writing and symbols on the cards. Children enjoy playing together, whilst young children happily play alongside others, older children initiate activities which include their friends. For example, as children played with a 'There was an old lady who swallowed a fly' game, they took turns in feeding the old lady flies and other animals and giggled together.

Initial and on-going assessments are in place, these identify what children can do, what children like to do and what are the next steps in their learning. Tracker books

are used to chart this and these records are shared with parents on a regular basis, allowing them to contribute to their children's learning. The childminder skilfully uses this information to challenge and stretch children's learning in all activities.

The childminder gives children's safety an extremely high priority. For example, close circuit television is in place which monitors access to the premises and the children whilst they are sleeping upstairs. Children develop an excellent understanding of keeping themselves safe, they regularly practise the fire evacuation plan and are able to talk confidently about the procedure and where the exits are. Exceptional care is taken to meet the needs of children who have special health and dietary requirements. For example, after carrying out a risk assessment on the safety of these children at play and toddler groups the childminder commissioned badges and a play mat to be made, which clearly say 'please don't feed me I have an allergy'. In addition, the childminder sources additional foods for these children so that their meals are visually the same as all of the other children's.

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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary 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.