

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223376
Inspection date	08/12/2008
Inspector	Josephine Mary Hammick
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 1995. She lives with her husband and three adult children in the city of Hereford. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access is on ground level with downstairs cloakroom facilities.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time on the Early Years, Compulsory and Voluntary Childcare Registers and is currently minding three children under five who all attend on a part-time basis. The childminder uses her vehicle to take and collect children from local pre-schools and groups. The childminder also attends local toddler groups with the children. The family has one rabbit and one guinea pig that live in hutches outside. The family also have a gerbil.

The childminder cares for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is currently taking part in a quality assurance scheme.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Good knowledge of children's individual needs ensures that the childminder promotes all aspects of their welfare and learning well. Children are safe and secure and enjoy visits and outings into the local area to raise their awareness of the world around them. The partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes to ensuring that the needs of all children are met and that they get any additional support they need. Children make steady progress, given their age, ability and starting points. Regular evaluation of the service ensures that areas for development are identified and acted upon, resulting in a service that meets the needs of all children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- match observations to the expectations of the early learning goals. (Welfare 4)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder uses self-evaluation processes to identify areas for professional development. For example, she is enrolled in a quality assurance scheme, and attended workshops, such as safeguarding children. She also carries out research on the internet to extend her knowledge and expertise if needed. She has also formalised her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework in order to keep up to date with current legislation. The childminder has enhanced

her resources and equipment to accommodate personal preference. Toys are easily accessible for children and are kept in floor-level storage boxes so that children can self-select. Robust systems are in place to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of development in order to plan improvements.

Written policies and procedures are in place to protect children, including child protection, equal opportunities and health and safety. They are well thought out and the childminder reviews them regularly to ensure their relevance to her current practice. For example, the equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice policy is actively promoted to ensure that all children and families feel included, safe and welcome. Procedures to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded are good. For example, doors are kept locked at all times and only named adults collect children. Hygiene procedures are robust, minimising the risk of cross-infection and medication procedures are followed vigilantly. Risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis, including those for outings and visits. This ensures consistency and the safety of children.

Children's specific dietary requirements are respected, adhered to and recorded. Children bring in their own foods for mealtimes. The childminder also offers healthy snacks which are nutritionally balanced and low in fat, sugar and salt. For example, children choose from fresh or dried fruit.

Parents are made to feel welcome and have opportunities to share information about their children on a daily basis, through discussion and looking at their child's learning record book. Feedback from parents is positive and they feel comfortable to share information with the childminder. The focus of communication is on children's welfare and their learning and development. Starting points are identified on admission and observations carried out. However, there are no systems in place to evaluate and record progress towards the early learning goals. Well thought out planning of activities is in place based on children's individual preferences and learning styles. Planning also refers to the six areas of learning to ensure a good balance of opportunities.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children benefit from the childminder organising fun and interesting activities and experiences. For example, babies enjoy books and stories; they turn the pages and look at the brightly coloured pictures and bold text. Children respond to music and singing sessions. The babies delight in the repetition of rhyme. They love looking at the colourful illustrations and identifying familiar objects, sometimes in dual languages, so that all children develop their understanding of the written word and simple vocabulary. The childminder uses this time to develop their awareness and understanding of numbers, letters and shapes. The childminder knows the children's preferences well and therefore what will stimulate them to enjoy different experiences.

The childminder is sensitive to encourage babies' development and their independence is enhanced by helping them to feed themselves, and to help tidy away their toys at clearing up time. Older children are encouraged to wash their

own hands before food, after using the lavatory and going outside.

Children have a well thought out and balanced day and are able to explore and take part in a wide range of activities. For example, they enjoy daily access to painting or creative play, puzzles, dressing up and imaginative play. Their achievements are displayed attractively in their learning files. At other times, they are able to access quieter activities, and when they are tired, have a rest or sleep. They make good use of the enclosed garden and enjoy being able to benefit from fresh air and the ability to let off steam. Children also go for regular visits into the neighbourhood or for walks into the countryside. They go to gym sessions, toddler groups and swimming at the local leisure centre. Days out have included trips to the railway station and farm park. In order for children to benefit from larger group experiences, the childminder arranges to take them to the local children's centre. Recent visits have included opportunities to celebrate Divali.

Children respond well to the firm but fair behaviour boundaries set down by the childminder. The very young have a developing understanding of how to take turns and share. They know that they must be gentle with each other and adhere to the simple 'rules of the house'. For example, they are learning not to climb on the furniture, to be aware of road safety and how to handle cooking equipment.

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?	3
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 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.