

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223777
Inspection date	08/10/2008
Inspector	Patricia Webb
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 has been registered since 1999. She lives with her husband and three children aged six, 11 and 13 years in Bridgnorth in Shropshire. The whole of the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding including the conservatory and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. Toilet facilities are on the first floor. All areas on the ground floor are easily accessible.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register Compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the Voluntary part of the Childcare Register caring for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. The childminder also cares for children over eight years of age. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and visits local toddler groups.

The family has two dogs.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The childminder provides highly effective care and learning opportunities, promoting very positive outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each child is acknowledged as an individual as the childminder works very closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that specific needs are met and all children are included. Children are extremely settled and content in the childminding environment as they share warm and friendly relationships with the childminder and their peers.

A key strength of the provision is that the childminder completes regular and very thorough self-evaluation, clearly identifying strengths and any areas for improvement. The childminder has an extremely clear and concise understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, planning effectively to ensure that next steps are prepared for each individual child. Whilst risk assessments are conducted and recorded, some details are omitted from the record.

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 the risk assessment procedure by recording dates of fire drills and when any action has been taken

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is strong commitment from the childminder to offer a professional service to promote children's welfare, care and safety. She holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Play Work and uses the knowledge and her extensive skills

and enthusiasm to plan and provide exciting and varied activities. For example, children chat animatedly about having collected leaves, conkers and twigs when out on a recent walk to be used to create their collages.

Records, policies and procedures are very well maintained, ensuring that parents are kept fully informed of the childminding arrangements and the ethos of the service. Highly effective records are kept of children's progress as detailed observations are noted and used to plan for the next steps in each child's learning. For example, when engaged in numbers activity, the childminder works with two children who are both at different levels of understanding, knowing how to extend and challenge the older child whilst enabling the other child to also achieve. All progress records are shared with parents to ensure they are involved in their child's progress.

The childminder has implemented extremely effective procedures for beginning to work in close partnership with other agencies, such as one child's school, in order to offer consistency. Planning and assessment is carried out ensuring that Early Years Foundation Stage guidance is followed. There are highly robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision and to ensure that improvements are made where necessary. For instance, the self-evaluation form has been completed to a very high level, with the childminder highlighting how further improvements can be made to enhance children's experiences. This is reflected in the recent re-organisation of the conservatory and access to resources.

Children's welfare is a high priority for the childminder who understands her duty and responsibility to safeguard and protect children in her care. Her knowledge of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and attention to vetting procedures reassures parents that the childminder and members of the household are suitable to have regular contact with children thereby promoting safety. Whilst risk assessments are carried out and recorded, some details such as dates and any action that needed to be taken to address hazards is not sufficiently noted.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are highly valued and respected by the childminder. They enjoy independently accessing the vast resources available to enhance their play and learning as they negotiate easily around the child-friendly home indoors and outside. Delight is experienced, for example, when children engage in sand and water play outside as they discuss the floating and sinking properties of various objects. They are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills from an early age demonstrated when the childminder prompts a discussion about how much water is needed in the water trough and what receptacles will hold the most water. This close involvement in the children's play fosters their self-esteem as they know that their efforts are highly valued and acknowledged. Such achievement is discussed with parents and carers who share in the children's learning journey books which are being very effectively developed. One child proudly shares the digital video of his mastering of a two-wheeled bicycle with great pride and happiness at his own achievement.

Colourful displays of children's work and individual interests are displayed around the home helping children to feel that this is their space. The childminder develops their language through reading stories and involving them in questions about the story. Children are also assisted in developing their early writing and letter sound skills as for instance the childminder phonetically spells out a child's name and he writes it down competently. All such efforts and achievements are observed and recorded, to be used by the childminder to plot and plan for the next steps in their progress.

Children are encouraged to celebrate a range of festivals and access resources reflecting positive images of the diversity of society. This promotes their awareness of the differences and needs of others. Lots of praise and encouragement is offered to develop children's self-esteem and encourage acceptable behaviour. Older children understand the simple and easily achievable positive house rules and are learning right from wrong through the calm and consistent approach modelled by the childminder.

Children understand about leading a healthy lifestyle. They follow very effective routines to reduce the spread of infection in their personal hygiene and any accidents are managed efficiently with children comforted and nurtured. They choose healthy options for meals and snacks learning from discussions with the childminder about how fresh fruit such as oranges can help to protect them from getting colds because of the vitamin C.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

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

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

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

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 that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action.

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.