

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	303666
Inspection date	25/02/2009
Inspector	Carole, Jean Craven
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 two teenage children in a stone cottage in Southowram, Halifax. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there are two fully enclosed garden areas for outside play. Toilet facilities are located on the ground floor and older children have access to her sons bedroom which is also on the first floor. The building has disabled access.

The childminder is registered to care for 9 children in the early years age group when working with an assistant. The childminder offers care for children in the later years age group providing out of school care; this provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary part of the childcare register. There are currently 25 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder provides support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and belongs to a quality assurance scheme 'Children Come First'.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are making good progress in their learning and development and their welfare is extremely well promoted. They are cared for in a safe, stimulating and inclusive environment where they are respected and valued as individuals. Good information is shared with parents and other professionals ensuring consistency of care. The childminder continuously self evaluates her provision to identify areas that can be further developed and is beginning to do this more rigorously.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that fire evacuation procedures are practiced regularly so that all children remain aware of them
- ensure that observations and assessments are used to identify learning priorities and plan relevant learning experiences for each child.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very positive attitude to her professional development through ongoing training. She ensures that her assistants have access to training and are able to keep up to date with current practice. She has identified the need to improve her knowledge of observations, assessment and planning and she is currently accessing training in these areas through the local authority early years

team. She regularly evaluates her provision and the activities provided with her assistants.

Parents are given good information about all areas of the childminding service including information about all policies and procedures. They are given verbal information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and their children's play and development is tracked in their records of achievement which parents take home each month. Planning is displayed for parents to give them the opportunity to talk to their children about what they are doing at the childminders. However, planning is not individual to the child. The childminder has very good relationships with all the families attending the provision and holds parties twice a year to socialise informally with them. She is very supportive to parents whose children have learning or developmental needs and works closely with them and their support workers. The childminder maintains good links with other childminders in the area to discuss and share ideas and she has a good relationship with the local school.

The childminder fully understands her responsibility under the Children Act to keep children safe and keeps up-to-date with training and changes to legislation. She is experienced in safeguarding procedures and confident in her understanding of local procedures. Effective risk assessments are in place to further safeguard children, however, procedures for fire evacuation are not practiced frequently enough. The environment is clean, warm and very well cared for. Resources, toys and equipment are all in good, clean condition and of very high quality.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. They are given good one to one support in their learning and development and the childminder provides a rich and varied environment that effectively contributes to their learning. They have lots of space and move freely between the two playrooms where they make choices about their play and initiate their own learning. They are aware where each resource is stored and choose from toy boxes labelled with writing and pictures of their contents. They experience a good sense of belonging through the warm and welcoming environment where children's artwork, pictures and posters are displayed in the play room and kitchen. They are happy, settled and very involved in their play. The childminder plans her routine to ensure that children have lots of experiences of purposeful play and exploration. For example, during the recent heavy snow falls the children played in the snow and made bird feeders to hang outside. Some of the children were able to successfully identify the birds they saw from a poster in the playroom. The childminder spends a great deal of time extending children's language skills and critical thinking. For example, when reading a story about animals, there is a pink striped zebra, the childminder asks if they have ever seen a pink zebra, lots of discussion follows about the different animals in the book. The children spend time looking at photographs of themselves involved in different activities and are able to identify other children attending the setting and their siblings when they were younger. This gives them a sense of place in the world. Children have good opportunities for outdoor play. In fine weather they can access the outdoor area as they choose. They can rest or sleep as they need and have comfy seating to relax

on. Children learn about problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in their day to day practice. They solve problems by putting together large areas of train tracks and build bridges and tunnels on the line. A child delights in finding three extra red items during play to put on the red display. Children have use of a computer with simple games to learn mouse skills or use the up and down arrows to progress the game.

Interaction between the childminder, her assistant and the children is very good. They have lots of fun, cuddles, eye contact and conversation and the childminder spends time playing with them on the floor and at their eye level. Children are encouraged and praised for reaching milestones, such as removing their shoes and putting them in the shoe box on arrival and finding them again when they go out. This gives them a feeling of self worth.

The childminder is exceptionally skilled and experienced in caring for children with additional learning or development needs. She is currently caring for several children with complex needs and works very closely with parents and other professionals to meet their needs. She is involved with speech therapists, the hearing and sight impaired services, portage workers and the child development unit. She takes steps to ensure that all children are valued, such as keeping the environment unchanged when a child with very poor sight attends so that the child does not get injured.

Children are cared for in a safe, clean environment where they learn to take care of themselves. They are learning about personal hygiene and children are able to help themselves to tissues and dispose of them correctly, they have paper towels when washing their hands to prevent cross-contamination. The childminder maintains very high standards of hygiene throughout the provision, anti-bacterial wipes and sprays are in everyday use and her kitchen is regularly checked by environmental health officers. The childminder provides a healthy range of freshly prepared and home cooked meals and snacks. The children sit at the table to eat, with the childminder and her assistant. They talk about their morning and what the older children have been doing at nursery. This encourages their social skills and language development.

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?	1
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?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

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?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
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 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.