

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	256502
Inspection date	23/03/2009
Inspector	Lesley Gadd
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 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 1997. He lives with his wife, who is his co-childminder, and two adult children in Old Catton, near Norwich, in Norfolk. Most of the property 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 under the age of eight years. At times, when the childminder works with his co-childminder, a maximum of six children under five years may be cared for. There are currently seven children on roll who are cared for on a part-time basis, five of whom are in the early years age range. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, compulsory part of the Childcare Register and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The childminder is currently undertaking work to become a member of the local childminding network. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder knows the children well and works with their parents and carers to meet individual needs. Links with some of the other provisions children attend have been developed to make sure information is exchanged and children's well-being is supported. Children's welfare is considered a high priority and they are making good progress with their learning and development. However, assessment systems for children's learning are not fully secure. Children's health and the childminder's approach towards partnerships with others and the implementation of his safeguarding responsibilities are exceptionally well-promoted.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further improve links between assessment of children's skills and planning of activities to ensure children's next steps in learning are fully promoted in all areas of learning
- implement plans to make further provision, using suitable equipment, for children to sleep or rest in comfort.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder attends a range of courses to keep up-to-date with matters such as first aid and safeguarding. He works well with his co-childminder and this further supports the care the children receive as good teamwork is displayed. Children are valued and respected as individuals with support being given to babies to ensure they are involved in everyday activities. The childminder is a

positive male role model for the boys and girls that attend and he seizes informal opportunities to discuss the positive imagery in the setting around gender and ability. Partnerships with parents are excellent. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to play a part in the settling-in procedure, with this being flexible to meet individual needs. A daily chat and use of routine diaries help to keep them informed about the care of their children and they contribute to their child's learning record. Links are being developed with the local schools to further support children's continuity of care and learning. The childminder is well-organised and ensures all the relevant documentation and policies are in place to reassure parents about their children's well-being.

Risk assessments are conducted and much action has been taken to minimise risks on the premises and on outings. The childminder checks facilities before children attend to ensure areas and equipment used for play are safe and children are only sent home with those named on their admission forms. The self-evaluation process has been started and the childminder continues to identify weaknesses and where continued improvements can be made to the quality of the service. The childminder has met the recommendations from the last inspection regarding medication records and holding contact details for parents on outings which further supports the children's safety and welfare. The childminder has a very good understanding about the signs and symptoms of child abuse and knows the correct referral procedure to ensure children are well-protected. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe through discussion about stranger danger.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children take part in a good range of activities in the home and garden. They are well-supported by the childminder who is attentive and supportive to the children in their play and learning. Children's interests often form the basis for planned activities with the importance of learning from continuous play provision being well acknowledged. The childminder contributes to observations and assessments made by himself and his co-childminder and undertakes planning of activities for the children. Through discussion and watching children at play, the childminder is able to make assessments about children's skills. However, this information is not yet entirely effectively utilised in planning of activities. As a result, children's next steps for learning are not robustly supported in all areas.

Children's health is exceptionally well-promoted. They enjoy a very nutritious snack menu, such as raisins and strawberries. Robust measures are in place to accommodate dietary needs such as, for example, egg allergies, which are understood and the range of snacks and meals are adapted accordingly. Children sit together and chatter with the childminder about what they have been doing and may do later, with social skills being promoted as part of the routine of sitting at the table at snack times. Children are involved in growing produce and have a strong awareness about healthy eating and food origins. Children are learning how to manage their personal hygiene well as they wash their hands before eating and play outdoors during the day in the fresh air exercising their lungs and rapidly developing their physical skills. Babies are keen to push themselves up on their arms and roll over on the mat, enjoying strengthening their muscle tone.

The environment is welcoming and children confidently access a good range of safe resources, helping to promote their independence. Children are able to rest when tired. The childminder has suitable plans to provide improved sleeping facilities; but cots, whilst available, are not currently being used with minded children. Children find a pleasing range of jigsaw games and demonstrate their problem solving skills well as they fix pieces together. They also comment on colour and number prompted by the childminder's open questioning. Children use their growing communication skills to talk about what they are doing when playing the game and babies are involved as they sit on the childminder's knee sharing the interaction between the children, whilst chewing a squeaky toy.

Children are encouraged to develop their knowledge about safety for future independence by the childminder. He talks to the children about why they need to wear seat belts when travelling in the car and they help to practice fire drills. Children enjoy a good variety of messy play to stimulate their senses and creativity. They take part in regular cooking events and enjoy sand and craft activities. Children's behaviour is good. They play together, are learning to share well and show consideration for others as they follow the positive role model portrayed by the childminder.

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?	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?	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?	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

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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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