

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	202229
Inspection date	31/03/2009
Inspector	Sandra Daniels
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 1990. She lives with her husband, who is also her registered assistant, and two adult children. They live in a residential area within walking distance of schools, shops and the railway station in South Woodham Ferrers. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and this includes a dedicated playroom and cloakroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of 6 children at any one time and is currently minding a total of 17 children, of various ages, seven of whom are in the early years age group. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder has achieved accredited childminder status. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder and her assistant are exceptional in acknowledging each child's uniqueness and promoting their welfare effectively through excellent childminding practices. Positive and caring relationships are established with the children and their families, hence their individuality is acknowledged and valued. The childminder provides a homely and fully inclusive environment where children have a wonderful sense of belonging. All children make exceptional progress in their learning and development through the childminder's consistent interaction and support. The process of self-evaluation is effective as it plans for improvement valuing children's and parent's contributions.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the self-evaluation process to further involve parents and children.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder provides a warm and friendly home from home for children who are clearly very happy and contented in her care. Much thought has been given to the organisation of the environment which is child-centred allowing children to be independent and learn at their own pace. Toys are accessible and clearly labelled in order that children can have free choice; this gives them confidence and self-motivation. Robust formal risk assessments mean children play in a safe and secure environment and are also safe when they are away from the setting. The childminder's strong knowledge of child protection issues protects children from harm and abuse. All required documentation to support children's welfare and education is maintained to a high standard. Posters displayed on the wall and a

policy which is shared, confirm that parents understand how to make a complaint should they wish to do so. The childminder's current first aid training and up to date first aid boxes allow her to take appropriate action in an emergency. Accident and medication records are kept along with written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Self-evaluation reflects rigorous monitoring and identifies the strengths of the setting and areas for improvement.

Regular practise of fire drills, visits to the local fire station and house rules help children learn to take responsibilities for their own safety. The childminder thrives on continuous improvement and is committed to providing best outcomes for children. This is evident in her eagerness to learn and improve. She has attended many workshops and short courses to further develop her knowledge and understanding of childcare and education. She shows great professionalism in her practice. Since the last inspection all recommendations have been addressed and many more improvements have been made which have resulted in positive outcomes for children. For example, the use of paper towels in the cloakroom reduces the risk of cross-infection. Partnerships with parents and other carers are very good. Parents speak very highly of the childminder. She has established formal and informal channels of communication with parents to discuss children's progress and to ensure that their individual needs are met. Comprehensive daily diaries for younger children are shared with parents containing information on how the child has spent his/her day. As a result, parents feel comfortable leaving their children in the childminder's care. Parents are encouraged to take part in their children's learning by contributing to topics, for example, a parent who is a police officer visited the setting to talk with the children about keeping themselves safe. The childminder has very good links with the pre-school and school which some of the children attend. This demonstrates her commitment to providing an excellent and seamless childcare service.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder provides a highly stimulating learning environment which, supported by positive input and well chosen quality resources, assists children's progress towards the early learning goals. Children develop their independence as they choose from a variety of activities on offer in the play-room or take part in an adult-led activity such as cooking. The opportunities offered to the children are respectively adapted and extended to allow all children to take part and achieve as well as they can regardless of their stage of development or ability. For example, in painting activities, babies and toddlers investigate and experiment with the paints and paper, whilst older children make connections and produce their interpretations of previous events or favourite things.

The childminder is proactive in ensuring the children are progressing with their development, by observing and making assessments on all of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). These assessments are linked to the six areas of learning and include each child's next steps, which allows the childminder to maximise each child's potential in learning. Success is celebrated and children's artwork is displayed prominently making them feel that what they have created is valued. Children also take great enjoyment from looking at the many photographs

of themselves engaged in various activities. The childminder clearly understands the stages of development that children pass through. This and an excellent knowledge of the children that she is caring for enables her to plan activities that extend children's learning and are suitable to their individual needs. Babies are beginning to find their voices as they receive lots of stimulation. They enjoy one-to-one stories with the childminder and flourish in the closeness of this.

The childminder plans her time well. Planning is flexible and the children can decide what activities they wish to participate in, which helps to ensure a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children's independence skills are encouraged as all activities are stored at their level and they can choose which activities they would like to play with. Children learn the importance of putting away finished activities before new ones come out. This ensures they remain focused, encouraging their concentration, and helps them become aware of safety and trip hazards as well as how resources should be stored. Children's behaviour is excellent and this is encouraged through praise and reminders to children to be kind and share with one another.

The childminder incorporates and supports children's learning whilst they are having fun, leading to confident learners. For example, children collected snow and used it to create a polar landscape following their current theme. On a visit to the post office and depot, children discovered the process of mail collections and deliveries as they each 'wrote' a postcard and sent it to their home address. Children have good access to a wide range of authentic resources which promote diversity and equality. This helps them to develop positive attitudes to society and learn about the world we live in. They dress up in real Chinese and Indian costumes as they celebrate the Chinese New Year and Diwali together. Children gain great confidence in language and literacy skills as they converse and interact enthusiastically with the childminder and her assistant, who know how to extend their vocabulary as they play. For example, when looking through a set of binoculars, children learn that, depending on which way round the binoculars are held, an object can appear to be either nearer or further 'in the distance' than it actually is. Children use resources such as shape sorters, bricks and puzzles to learn about space, shape and measure. They enjoy sand play, junk modelling, painting, drawing and cake baking to express their creativity. Children have many opportunities to explore the world around them, as they go for walks around the neighbourhood, visit local parks and feed baby animals at the farm.

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
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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.