

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY310904
Inspection date	29/06/2009
Inspector	Karen Scott
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 2005. She lives with her husband and children, aged five and 11 years, in Snodland, close to shops, parks, schools and pre-schools. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding, the toilet is downstairs, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has marine fish.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and attends several toddler groups on a regular basis. She is a member of an approved childminding network.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and is keen to reflect Every Child Matters. The childminder ensures that she knows the children she is minding well so that she is able to plan activities that enhance their development throughout the six areas of learning. Very detailed children's portfolios, which are a fantastic souvenir for parents and carers, help the childminder to do this and children are making noticeable progress. The childminder evaluates her practice, seeking the opinions of the families and children that use her services as well as liaising with other practitioners. This helps her to make continuous improvements and offer good care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review and update the child protection policy to include procedures to be followed if an allegation is made about the childminder or a member of her family and the procedures that will be followed if a child goes missing or is uncollected.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has used the online evaluation tool to assess the care that she offers and to think about any improvements to be made. She sees evaluation as a valuable tool and will do so continuously in order to improve her service. The childminder values the opinions of the families that use her service, asking parents and carers for their views and involving children by asking them what toys they

like to play with and their preferred activities, for example. The childminder liaises with other childminders and learns from their practices. She continuously updates her knowledge through training in order to improve outcomes for children. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been given high regard and steps taken to act on them. For example, the complaints procedure reflects current guidelines and parents and carers are provided with the relevant information should they feel the need to make a complaint. Parents and carers are kept informed about the childminder's services as they are provided with detailed policies and procedures which are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date. Parents know about what their children have been doing each day as information is exchanged verbally and contact books are filled in with parents signing them to acknowledge that they have read them. The childminder works with families to settle children. She visits them at their own homes, helping to get a feel of their likes and dislikes, for example. The childminder and parents share children's achievements and celebrate them together. Very detailed portfolios, which are crammed full of photographs, help parents and carers to further share in their child's time with the childminder. Parents and carers feel supported by the childminder and feel that they can talk to her about family concerns. They are very pleased with the progress their children are making and appreciate learning about their children's achievements and the suggestions for next steps to further aid their development.

The childminder understands her role in the protection of children. A good understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should she have any concerns helps her to safeguard children from harm. The childminder has thought about what she would do if an allegation was made against herself or a member of her family but has not shared this with parents and carers in her written policies and procedures. Although the childminder is prepared for emergencies, such as children going missing or remaining uncollected, this has also not been shared with parents and carers in her written policies and procedures.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder undertakes very detailed and regular written risk assessments of her home, garden and any places that she and the children visit in order to ensure their safety and to take steps to minimise risks to children. Before playing in parks, for example, the childminder checks for hazards such as broken glass and when on outings children wear wrist bands with the childminder's telephone number. When indoors children are given gentle reminders about safety, such as not running indoors, and practise evacuation of the house regularly so that they are prepared for an emergency. Before new children start the childminder works with parents to undertake a risk assessment that is specific to that child's needs and to help plan for the potential risks that are individual to that child's age and stage of development. Children benefit from playing in a clean and well-organised environment. Good hygiene practices are promoted as children wash their hands at appropriate times and dry them on paper towels. Children have daily physical exercise in the garden where there is a variety of resources promoting physical development or on walks or at the park, for example. Children are able to help

themselves to drinks whenever they wish and are prompted to have drinks when they may be extra thirsty during hot weather, for example, helping children to remain hydrated. Lunch time is a social occasion and children's independence is promoted as they feed themselves. Children learn about healthy options and where food comes from when participating in role play such as playing cafes. The childminder eases children's transition from home to her setting by finding out what they like to play with and then making sure that these toys and resources are available on their first day. The playroom is a very welcoming environment with children's artwork displayed, making them feel that what they have created is valued. There are also photographs of the children and ceiling displays which younger children enjoy looking at. The childminder knows children's routines well, enabling her to meet their individual needs. For example, she is ready and waiting to give a child a reassuring cuddle when he awakes after his usual half hour sleep. Children enjoy looking at the fish and the childminder understands that they have a calming influence on children.

Children make choices about what they play with from a range of resources which are easily accessible in boxes that are clearly labelled with words and pictures. They also participate in adult-led activities. Children lead their play but benefit from positive interaction from the childminder who knows what they enjoy playing with and therefore ensures those resources are easily available. Toys and resources are appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. Each child has their own portfolio which is crammed full of written and photographic observations of them. These are shared regularly with parents and carers and are a fantastic record of children's achievements and the activities that they participate in when with the childminder. Observations of children are evaluated and used to plan for children's next developmental steps and the portfolios show that children are making excellent progress through the developmental stepping stones. Children's economic development is enhanced through regular visits to toddler groups which encourage their social development. Children have use of a computer and play with programmable toys. They particularly enjoy making shopping lists, drawing what they need to buy, and ticking off the items as they purchase them. Children learn about the local environment and caring for others by nurturing caterpillars that grow into butterflies then releasing them into the wild, for example. They also enjoy growing vegetables and flowers.

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.	1

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

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?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
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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