

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	400968
Inspection date	27/02/2009
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
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 1986. She lives with her family in detached house in Whitby. She works with an assistant on a daily basis. All childminding facilities are easily accessible being on the ground floor. There is an enclosed garden to the rear of the property for outdoor play. The house is close to the local school and other facilities in the area. Minded children are not usually transported by car.

The childminder is registered to take a maximum of six children under eight years old; this number may be exceeded when the assistant is present. There are currently 14 children on roll in the early years age group. The childminder is also included on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. At the time of inspection there was one older child attending occasionally in relation to this part of her registration. The childminder provides support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The childminder is a member of National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder provides a warm cheerful environment where children settle well and make good progress. She works efficiently with an assistant, parents and with other agencies to promote an exceptional level of individualised care and support for children with a broad range of needs. Links with other providers in relation children's learning and development are less clearly defined. On the whole, the childminder is very aware of her strengths and weaknesses and puts effective plans into place to remedy any gaps in the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review critically and revise the learning environment to give all children increased free access to all six areas of learning in the indoor and outdoor areas throughout the day
- continue to develop systems for monitoring and promoting children's continued progress, engaging parents and other providers where appropriate.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder and her assistant work very well together to provide a high level of stability and continuity in children's lives. They have considerable experience of providing good quality provision for children with a broad range of care and learning needs. The two adults evaluate their practice together, taking the views of parents and the local authority's advisory service into account. They make relevant

plans to make continuous improvement to their skills and knowledge and to the service provided. For example, in recognising minor weaknesses in their knowledge about children's learning and development due to the changing inspection frameworks, both adults are complementing their experience and knowledge by obtaining recognised qualifications. The childminder and her assistant use their training well; both talk enthusiastically about recent and forthcoming training and how it helps to improve their practice. However, their self-evaluation system has not looked critically at the indoor and outdoor physical environment in relation to the six areas of learning.

There is good clear information for parents and carers in the form of policies and procedures. Parents value the daily diary which gives them a clear insight into children's care routines and significant aspects of their development. There is some information about the educational programme for parents and a good range of photographs show them how this is delivered through play. Parents have free access to their children's observation folders. However, some parents are not fully engaged with their children's learning. Whilst they contribute enthusiastically to the inspection process, writing detailed letters confirming the childminder's and the assistant's focused approach to meeting children's individual needs and supporting families, not many comment on the quality of the educational programme. Importantly, the highly effective three-way relationships that children have with the childminder and their parents or carers provide an exceptionally stable environment where children thrive and develop very well. A rolling programme of highly relevant training, the adults' knowledge of individual children and their families, and carefully filed information mean that children very well protected and their well-being safeguarded.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are able, on the whole, to access all six areas of learning as they play freely in the stimulating playroom and large garden. They help themselves freely from the items that they can reach and confidently tell the childminder when they want something they cannot see. However, limited storage and excess of some particular play equipment cuts down on the accessibility of the full curriculum. For example, because there are sometimes so many dolls and lidded storage boxes, there is nowhere to set up a permanent mark-making or art area. The outdoor area is used well to benefit children's health and their development, although the full curriculum is generally only available in the garden in better weather. Children's good health is promoted as they engage in a good range of physical play in the fresh air every day. They develop their strength and skill as they climb, swing or play with balls and are sometimes very contemplative as they build or make patterns in the covered sand pit. Children confidently express themselves in their role play; they make up increasingly complex storylines. The effective use of the garden further encourages this aspect of children's development, for example, children who prefer more active learning styles contribute much more confidently to the storylines once in the outdoors. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they play in the outdoors. The adults watch them vigilantly without being overly protective, which opens up exciting opportunities in the garden. Young children learn the necessary skills to manage their own safety as they go up and down the

step or bounce on the small trampoline; older children develop good balancing skills and they watch out carefully for the younger ones as they play. Older children talk confidently about the childminder's emergency evacuation procedures and how to contact the emergency services; they practise this regularly.

Children develop a high level of independence; they are confident and very motivated in their play and learning. There is an exceptionally caring, supportive approach to meeting children's individual care and learning needs. Children are proud of the wonderfully warm praise and encouragement they receive for trying to put their own shoes on, for counting the pieces of jigsaw back into box and for being considerate to others. Consequently, children play very well together; they share and take turns with the minimum of adult support and are exceptionally caring towards each other. This has a significant impact on their care and development; children listen attentively to adults because they know that their own contributions are highly valued by the adults. This also encourages them to practise their language skills and share their thoughts. The adults delight in the younger children's early babblings, which encourages them further. The older children mimic the childminder and her assistant in this approach; they too encourage the babies' babbling and interest them in the equipment and activities. Older children contribute happily to the inspection process; they confidently show where they wash germs from their hands and say that the childminder's garden is the 'best thing'. The adults use observation of children as they play and information from parents and carers to establish children's level of development and to plan the next steps for their learning. However, systems to link with other early years settings that children also attend are less clear. The childminder knows other providers well, has an understanding of how they operate and attends local cluster group meetings. However, there is little liaison about individual children's learning and development to create a coordinated approach.

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.	3

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?	2

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?	2
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 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.