

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY299318
Inspection date	23/02/2009
Inspector	Jane Mount
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2004. He lives with his wife, who is also a registered childminder and both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice. They have two children aged 11 years and nine years and live in St Albans, Hertfordshire. All areas of the premises are included in the registration although the ground floor is mainly used for childminding purposes. There are toilet facilities on the ground floor and a fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play. Appropriate sleep facilities are available on the first floor for younger children needing a sleep during the day. The family has a pet cat.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Overnight care is not provided. Registration is for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time or 12 children when working with another childminder. In partnership with his wife the childminder has 22 children on roll of which eight children are in the early years age range and eight are in the later years age group. The remaining children are aged over eight years. Children attend on a full-time and part-time basis, including before and after school and during the school holidays. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and a local childminding group.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children flourish in a child-centred environment where they experience a wealth of stimulating play experiences and opportunities. Along with his wife who is a co-childminder he tailors activities to the individual child and consequently children are making excellent progress in their learning and development. Excellent partnerships with parents, carers and others positively contributes to the childminder's knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs and supports their continued development. The needs of all children are effectively met through recognising the uniqueness of each child. Exceptionally well-organised documentation underpins highly-effective practice and evaluative assessment of the provision demonstrates the childminder's excellent understanding of the settings key strengths and areas for future development.

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 further the use of a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is committed to fully implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). He works in very close partnership with his wife who is also a registered childminder and both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice. He has a secure knowledge and understanding of child development and of the EYFS framework and this is reflected in his outstanding practice. Professional development takes high priority and on-going training effectively consolidates the childminder's knowledge and understanding of children's care, learning and development. For example, the childminder is in the process of completing an National Vocational Qualification(NVQ) Level three Childcare qualification and he has undertaken varied and extensive training to further develop his childcare practice. The childminder is committed to continuous improvement and is very pro-active in looking for new ways of improving the quality of care and learning provided. Some highly-effective systems are in place to monitor the quality of the provision such as the implementation of parent questionnaires. Also, all documentation is regularly reviewed and updated and areas highlighted for further development at the last inspection have been successfully addressed to further improve outcomes for children. Reflective self-evaluation procedures have been recently implemented and these clearly highlight the settings strengths and areas for further development. The childminder has an excellent understanding and genuine commitment to safeguard children's welfare and is clear on his role and responsibilities if he did have a concern. Rigorous risk assessments which cover the home, garden and outings reduce the risk of accidents and ensures children remain safe at all times.

The environment is well-organised, safe and supportive. The childminder successfully organises his time and resources to ensure children's needs are met. Children and their parents are welcomed into the childminder's home and highly-effective systems ensure an inclusive environment is provided. Parents receive a wealth of information about the childminding service which ensures parents are fully informed. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child commences and on a regular basis throughout their time in the childminding setting. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and achievements and are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning. For example, parents are kept informed of planned activities their children are going to be involved in. Highly-effective links have been made with other early years settings such as the local nursery and school that children attend. This enables the childminder to complement the EYFS being delivered at other settings as he is able to continue a topic or theme which results in children receiving continuity in their learning and care.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning is purposefully promoted through the childminder's excellent knowledge of the EYFS framework and child development. He uses the framework effectively to plan a broad and varied range of play experiences and opportunities which cover the six areas of learning. The childminder has a secure knowledge of

children's individual needs, personalities and learning preferences. He makes observations of children's learning and uses this information when planning for their next steps. Planning is detailed and caters for each child which ensures all children receive an enjoyable yet challenging experience. Children learn to be confident and to have a positive attitude to learning because of the guidance and support they receive from the childminder. Consequently, all children's learning needs are catered for and children are making excellent progress in their learning. Adult-led and child-initiated activities are well balanced and encourage children to be active learners. The childminder understands that every child is unique and works closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met.

The environment is child-centred and well organised with most resources at child height. Children are able to freely access toys which helps them to make choices and develops their independence skills. All children are included as successfully pitched activities ensure they receive the space to work at their own pace. Meticulous planning ensures that all children enjoy an extensive variety of play experiences and opportunities. The childminder interacts effectively with children asking questions and engaging them in conversation to support and promote their language and communication skills such as when looking at books together or reading stories. Children's mathematical development is encouraged through activities such as weighing the ingredients when cooking. Everyday routines are also used to their full potential such as talking about how many shoes make a pair when getting ready to play outside. Children have extensive opportunities to express themselves creatively and use a range of different mediums. For example, they delight in making plaster of paris hand casts for Diwali and decorating them or making boats from boxes and containers. Children are encouraged to use their imaginations such as when they designed and made a teepee. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world and a positive awareness of diversity is fully promoted. Children's understanding of the environment is increased through activities such as learning about nature and recycling. Children's physical development is actively promoted. For example, children have regular walks in the fresh air and visits to the park where they can run and climb. Children learn that physical activity is good for them and can be fun and indoor and outdoor environments are used to their full potential. At home, children have opportunities to develop their physical skills when playing inside such as when playing with bean bags or outside in the garden children enjoy riding on bikes or playing on the slide.

The childminder is pro-active in implementing highly-effective strategies to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. Children's health is fully protected as excellent hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross-infection are consistently applied. Children learn how to stay healthy and about personal care routines such as when they are reminded to wash their hands when returning from school or before eating and discuss the reasons for doing so. Children are well nourished with a balanced and nutritious range of food choices provided. Menus are planned on a three weekly cycle and are shared with parents. Meals and snacks are freshly prepared and children have regular opportunities to learn about healthy eating. Highly-effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety is protected and they develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, children participate in regular fire drills and enjoyed a visit to the local fire station. Consistent praise and

encouragement ensure that children develop high levels of self-esteem. Children are respected and highly valued as individuals and in turn are learning to respect differences and successfully manage their own behaviour. Children are developing a clear understanding of their own needs and a mature respect of the needs of others. Children play an active part in the setting and this results in them being secure in their surroundings and feeling confident in making choices.

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.