

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223368
Inspection date	19/03/2009
Inspector	Deborah Ball
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 2000. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and nine years on the outskirts of the market town of Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding. The childminder has procedures to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Children are taken on local visits and outings. The family have a hamster and fish.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and there are currently three children on roll within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is a member of the local childminding network and the National Childminding Association and is qualified to Level 3 in an appropriate childcare qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder has a very clear understanding of children's individual needs and interests, successfully promoting all aspects of their learning and development. She knows their characters very well, building upon each child's uniqueness and individual capabilities. Children settle very quickly in the warm and homely environment offered by the childminder who demonstrates a positive awareness of providing a fully inclusive setting. The systems for planning, assessment and observation of children's progress are being developed and the childminder is aware of the merits of evaluating the strengths and areas for improvement within her practice, all of which are in the early stages of implementation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the planning and assessment processes in order to clearly identify children's starting points and next steps in their learning and development
- develop further the self-evaluation process to build upon the strengths in the provision and work on areas for improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure in the childminder's care because close attention is paid to continually assessing risk within the home and for any outings and trips undertaken. Children's welfare is safeguarded as the childminder has a sound

knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and is very aware of the procedures for making a referral should there be any concerns about a child in her care. This commitment is shared with parents in the policy which is part of a set of well-written and pertinent policies and procedures keeping parents and carers informed of how the care of their children is organised. All other documentation is well-organised and maintained, successfully promoting children's health, safety and welfare.

The childminder is mindful of offering a fully inclusive service, welcoming all children and their families into her care. Strong working relationships with parents and carers are highly valued by the childminder, keeping them informed of their child's progress through daily discussions and the recent introduction of children's learning journeys to plot their ongoing learning, development and achievements. The assessment of individual children's progress is being developed based on observations and the childminder's knowledge of each child and their stages of development. The childminder acknowledges that this aspect and the self-evaluation of the provision are in their infancy, although the current stage of documentation is beginning to link to each small step in the areas of development and learning. There is a strong commitment from the childminder to attending relevant training in this aspect to ensure she is completing the process effectively and thereby enhancing the experiences for the children in her care. Consequently, they make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The childminder is endeavouring to forge working partnerships with other providers involved in the learning and development of the children, understanding how this can contribute to a consistent approach to the experiences planned.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are able to enjoy healthy, balanced and nutritious snacks throughout the day. In addition, the children enjoy packed lunches provided by parents within a social context at lunchtime. Children are able to take a drink when they wish as the childminder provides individual, age-appropriate cups and prompts younger children to take a drink frequently. Records and documentation are in place to ensure children's health needs are met, in line with the wishes of parents. The children have frequent opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and develop their physical skills using age-appropriate equipment.

Children benefit from a well-organised, homely and comfortable space where they can access enjoyable and fun activities which help them to learn and develop. Colourful and interesting toys and resources are readily available at low-level so that children are able to access their favourite activities within a free play environment. Children enjoy role-play activities, dressing-up and looking at books within the playroom area in free play time. They are attentive and listen well at story time whilst helping to retell a favourite story. They relish their time in the outdoor environment, using wheeled toys with increasing skill, exploring the texture of sand in the sand tray whilst filling various containers and developing their early mark making skills whilst drawing and colouring pictures. Outings are arranged with great thought given to ages and stages of maturity and how such

trips expand their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, children visited the Forest of Dean where they viewed birds and wildlife and explored various wooden play structures, including a man and horse leading an old cartload of logs, an old wooden ship under construction and wooden dens. This experience was enhanced further as the children became very industrious, building and constructing their own dens with a wide range of objects, selecting appropriate resources, and adapting their work where necessary. Children enjoyed a recent puppet theatre production of Peter and the Wolf and thought it was magical. Weekly visits to 'Jumpstart Kidz' provide opportunities to explore soft-play equipment together with songs, stories and refreshments. Children also enjoy visiting the park, providing opportunities to look around, view their natural surroundings and test their skills and confidence accessing larger play equipment under the watchful supervision of the childminder.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners, develop their self-esteem and confidence and make decisions about what they want to do because there is a good mix of opportunities available for child-initiated play alongside a range of adult-led activities which further support ongoing individual development. Activities and resources are provided which interest the children and help their development and progress towards the early learning goals. However, the childminder has highlighted that the systems for providing planned activities using individual assessments is an area for improvement.

The childminder ensures a broad range of activities are available to promote equality of opportunity and ensures that discussions and activities are woven into everyday activities, for example, a recent project looked at how St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in Ireland. This helps to support the children to become aware of the wider world. In addition, the close partnership with parents ensures that children's individual needs and routines are accommodated very well within the well-organised childminding space.

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?	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.