

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223373
Inspection date	11/02/2009
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and 12 years in a residential area situated in a village in North Herefordshire. The ground floor of the property and a first floor bedroom are 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. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and daycare settings. Children are taken on local visits and outings. The family have two dogs as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and there are currently six children on roll within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), four of whom attend on a part-time basis. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children settle extremely well with the childminder and enjoy a close and positive relationship with her. They are given lots of individual attention and are cared for within a warm, family atmosphere. Inclusive practice is promoted well so that the learning, development and welfare needs of all children are known and met, and they are cared for in a safe and healthy environment. However, the system of planning for children's next stages of development is not fully developed. Open and constructive relationships are developed with parents and these ensure that continuity of care is always maintained and that information about children is shared. The provision for continuing improvement is currently informal and is not yet sufficiently developed to ensure the childminder is able to make continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a self-evaluation system which identifies the key strengths and weaknesses to ensure continuous improvements are made
- develop further the systems for observational assessment in order to plan to meet young children's individual needs in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is well-organised and provides a safe, stimulating and secure environment for children which has a positive impact on their overall development. Children's care is enhanced because of the childminder's knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop. Children's learning and development needs are identified through observation and information from parents and the childminder has begun to use these to plan children's next steps. However, these systems are not yet sufficiently developed to identify what is required to ensure individual children are given the opportunity to move on to the next stage in their development. The childminder has a strong commitment to training and this helps her to continually improve on and reflect upon her provision for children. However, the childminder is yet to formalise the evaluation system and this affects her ability to make continuous improvements. Since the last inspection, the childminder has robustly addressed the recommendation raised and as a result, children participate in a range of activities which help to promote their awareness of a diverse world.

The childminder has effective systems for gathering relevant information from parents and carer to ensure individual children's routines are adhered to. They are provided with good quality information detailing how the children are cared for and how they are helped to extend their knowledge and skills. The good partnership with parents and carers is based on the effective sharing of information, which includes daily discussions and the use of daily diaries to inform them of how their children have spent their day. In addition, ongoing discussions about future activities and current issues mean that parents are well-informed about what their children are doing whilst they attend. The childminder also works closely with other settings in the area to ensure that children's individual needs and requirements are fully supported and addressed.

Effective steps are taken to promote children's good health and well-being and the childminder is vigilant in carrying out daily safety checks that protect children. Extensive risk assessments are used well to minimise possible dangers within the home, when on outings and trips. The childminder has a sound understanding of safeguarding children and has put into place effective strategies developed as a result of training. Clear records, policies and procedures have been developed to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment, and these are effectively put into practice.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children access a range of age-appropriate toys, resources and equipment within a homely and friendly space. A wide variety of colourful, stimulating toys and resources are freely available in low-level storage or are placed out for them by the childminder. Younger children thoroughly enjoy playing with a range of toys to encourage discovery and imagination, as well as physical skills. For example, musical instruments, discovery toys and a wealth of sensory play, such as exploring cereals, wet and dry sand, jelly and objects of different textures,

encourages exploration and investigation with good support and encouragement from the childminder. Opportunities to learn from new experiences are enabled as children are encouraged to explore the snow in the garden and watch closely as the snowflakes as fall from the sky. They make snowmen and explore the wet texture and coldness of the snow in their hands.

The provision for supporting children's health needs is effective because they are provided with healthy, balanced and nutritious homemade meals and snacks. Parents also have the choice of providing packed lunches. Children are reminded to take a drink of water or juice when they wish and are given a drink regularly throughout the day. Good hygiene procedures are implemented; for example, disposable gloves are worn whilst nappy changing takes place and babies' hands are washed at appropriate times with baby wipes which develops their early understanding of good hygiene practice. Records and documentation are up-to-date and help to ensure that children's health needs are met. Effective use is made of outdoors and the local community, with regular walks in the fresh air, and outings to the local toddler group provide babies with additional learning experiences and the opportunity to be sociable with other people. The garden provides an attractive area where children can explore, test and develop physical control with a wide range of outdoor activities and resources. The children enjoy digging in the sand pit, climbing on the climbing frame and playing on ride-on toys.

Children are fully supported to make decisions about what they want to do within this child-orientated, free play environment. The childminder provides a broad range of activities and resources which interest the children, whilst helping with their development and progress towards the early learning goals. However, the systems for providing planned activities for children using individual assessments has scope for further development to fully reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and this has been highlighted by the childminder as an area she wishes to improve.

The childminder supports children in a capable, calm, relaxed and caring manner, offering direction where required so that children remain motivated and interested. Children's individuality and family backgrounds are respected and the childminder works closely with their parents to ensure that their family traditions and cultures are known and met. Positive images of a diverse society are provided through playthings and even the youngest children are actively encouraged to learn about themselves, each other and to be sociable and confident with a variety of different people. When children who are bilingual attend the childminder's house, they see written labels in their home language and the childminder uses words from both languages as she supports their developing communication skills. In addition, the strong and effective partnership with parents ensures that children's individual needs and routines are accommodated very well on a daily basis.

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.