

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	127892
Inspection date	09/03/2009
Inspector	Ann Marie Cozzi

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 1992. She lives with her grown-up son in Ware, Hertfordshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding. Access to the childminder's home is via a small step in through the front door.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The childminder is currently minding three children in the early years age group. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The needs of individual children are met well as the childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child, in addition, she has begun to evaluate her practice in order to promote continuous improvement. All children are supported so that no group or individual is disadvantaged. Children are enabled by the childminder to make good progress in their learning and development; however, there is a minor weakness in her use of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance. There are clear systems in place to ensure that children's welfare, with regard to child protection is considered at all times; however, there are some weaknesses in relation to risk assessments. Partnerships with parents, carers and others, in the wider context, are used to promote some continuity of care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further sensitive observational assessment in line with practice guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage order to further plan to meet young children's individual needs; promote partnerships with parents and others.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- make sure that risk assessments identify when and by whom they have been checked; take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment and equipment, also applies to the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register)

23/03/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has undertaken all required training. All appropriate checks are in place for persons living in the household. The childminder has developed a range of written policies and procedures which are implemented in practice. For example, information regarding complaints ensures that parents and carers are made aware of the procedure. The organisation of the setting is good and demonstrates the childminder's understanding of her role and how she promotes children's welfare. Since the last inspection the childminder has made improvements and has undertaken a review of her service which, promotes an ethos for continuous improvement.

There are informal systems in place to keep parents, carers and others delivering the EYFS informed. These include some discussions about children's learning, how children have spent their time whilst with the childminder and any relevant care issues. However, this does not fully promote continuity of children's learning.

Children are safeguarded because there are suitable child protection policies in place and the childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities to protect children through her practices, these include her awareness of child protection issues. Most records are accurately maintained although risk assessments are limited, for example, they do not identify all potential everyday hazards children may come into contact with. The good health of children is promoted through the daily routine. Children are given gentle reminders to wash their hands at appropriate times and the childminder ensures that all children have independent access to drinks.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make good progress in their learning and development. This is because the childminder has a strong understanding of how children learn and develop through play. She ensures that activities are plentiful and her preparation of the environment means that children can easily access resources across all areas of learning. The childminder makes formal and informal observational assessments of the children in her care, in order to determine and plan for their next steps in learning. However, there is a minor weakness with regard to her use of the EYFS reference materials. As a result, this has the potential to hinder children's progress towards the early learning goals. Information gathered at the start of placement from parents and carers enables the childminder to plan and provide enjoyable learning and development experiences which meet each child's needs and interests. The range of written policies and procedures in place are inclusive for all children who attend and are made accessible to parents and carers.

The childminder employs a good range of clear behaviour management strategies. She ensures that consistent boundaries are applied and that they are appropriate to each child's level of understanding and maturity. This promotes children's understanding of how to behave in ways which are safe for themselves and others. However, as a result of the limited range of risk assessments children are not

always protected from potential hazards, for example, there are hazardous products stored in the bathroom which are accessible to children. In addition, risk assessments do not identify when and by whom they have been checked as required. Children enjoy exploring and investigating their environment and resources, for example, they are excited to discover that when they look through binoculars, what they see gets bigger or smaller depending on which end they look through. They have consistent support from the childminder as they, access an exciting range of activities and play experiences which promote their enjoyment of learning. For example, whilst the childminder reads a story, they join in by using an interactive programmable toy which makes the sound of each character.

Children have plenty of opportunities to take part in vigorous physical play, for example, on trips out to local activity centres they use resources such as soft play and a ball pool. At the childminder's home, they have access to the rear garden and outdoor play equipment. The childminder encourages children to adopt healthy habits, this is promoted by the inclusion of healthy options such as fresh fruit as snacks. A key strength of this setting is the childminder's interaction with the children in her care. She has a very good understanding of children's likes and dislikes and is skilled at using this and intonation in her voice to gain their interest and participation in activities. Through play, she encourages children to extend their vocabulary and learn about sounds and mathematical concepts, for example, whilst reading a children's magazine they discuss the sounds of letters and talk about big, little, large, small and how many more differences they need to find in a picture. Children are able to work independently and enjoy working in co-operation with the childminder. They are encouraged to become active learners; this is promoted well by the flexible routine and organisation of the setting which provides lots of opportunities for children to make choices and decisions independently.

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:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and Safety of Premises and Equipment) 23/03/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Suitability and Safety of Premises and Equipment). 23/03/2009

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.