

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	124027
Inspection date	24/02/2009
Inspector	Lindsay Hare
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 registered in 1997. She lives with her husband and three children aged two, nine and 13 years in Cheshunt. Most of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding except the extension, the upstairs bathroom and one bedroom for sleep purposes only. There is a secure garden for outside play. There is a small step leading to the front entrance of the property. The childminder cares for children during term-time and school holidays.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five to eight years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and attends a childminding group on a regular basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good and children are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development, although there are some weaknesses in the planning, observation and assessment process. Inclusive practice is promoted to ensure that each child has the opportunity to reach their potential and they are beginning to learn about the world around them through the many resources available that reflect positive images of diversity. The close partnership with parents ensures the needs of all children are met and that they get any additional support they may need. The childminder has completed an effective self-evaluation of her practice and is able to identify areas for improvement in order to secure future development. The recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the planning of activities to provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- improve the observation and assessment process for each child within the Early Years Foundation Stage to include what they have learnt and identify the next steps for individual children
- keep an accurate daily record of children's attendance
- obtain more information from parents regarding children's starting points in their learning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is able to identify the strengths of her childminding practice and is aware of the areas in which she needs to improve through completing the self-evaluation online. She has completed the introductory training and attended various workshops on topics relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and has booked further training in this area, having identified it as an area for improvement. Children are well supported by the childminder who takes time to engage in their play and develop their language skills. The process of observation and assessment has not been fully implemented for every child within the EYFS. This means that the next steps for individual children are not identified or planned for.

The childminder communicates well with parents to ensure that she provides consistency. She gains information relating to the needs of the children and provides comprehensive information to parents about the daily routine, sharing what the child has been doing whilst in her care. However, information about children's starting points is not requested from parents and this may mean that there are missed opportunities to extend their learning and development. The childminder is part of a childminding network and this helps her to keep up-to-date with current childcare issues. For example, the childminders within the group take turns to plan and deliver activities to the children attending the group, such as decorating cakes and biscuits.

The childminder's knowledge of safeguarding issues ensures that children are well protected and she has all the relevant literature and contact details in place.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. The planning of activities is not always based on the interests or learning needs of the individual children in her care, although they do experience a balanced range of activities and experiences provided by the childminder, and those on offer at the childminding group. For example, they thread their own necklaces using beads, create pictures rubbing over leaves and use their various senses as they play with play dough containing cinnamon and glitter.

The childminder supports children well, recognising those who are shy with new situations or visitors and offering cuddles. Children enjoy stories with the childminder and develop early literacy skills as they practise naming letters whilst completing an alphabet puzzle and use exercise books to develop letter formation and pencil control. Children play imaginatively as they build the track for the jeep, go shopping and are able to operate the CD player themselves. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they pretend to take photographs and receive text messages using the toy mobile phone. They begin to recognise numerals as they fit them onto the clock face and enjoy counting out spoonfuls of ingredients as they cook.

The warm environment and sensitive support enable children to develop their independence. For example, as they put on their shoes and lay the table for dinner. Children are becoming confident as they converse with the childminder, asking questions. They develop their social skills as they play with other children at the childminding group and take turns playing board games. Children regularly walk to school and nursery, and are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle as they eat nutritious meals and snacks and participate in physical activities, such as using the climbing equipment in the park and dancing indoors to music, playing musical statues and sleeping lions.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure environment where hazards have been minimised. Children's good health is promoted as they use their own cups and plates to prevent the spread of infection and there is a comprehensive sickness policy in place. Children are gaining an understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they follow rules, such as sitting up at the table when eating to prevent choking and basic road safety whilst out walking with the childminder. The good maintenance and implementation of policies, records and procedures supports the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensures that the needs of all children are met. However, the record of children's attendance does not show an accurate account of when children are present and this could compromise children's safety. All the necessary parental consents are in place. The childminder has a clear understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children and all the relevant literature.

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?	3
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?	3
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?	3

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
---	-----

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

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.