

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	158967
Inspection date	12/03/2009
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
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 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 August 2001. She lives with her husband and their daughter aged nine years in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding and designated areas of the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via five steps to the front; the rear access has a single step to the door or patio door.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to provide six places for children. There are currently seven children attending part-time hours, two of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Two children attend other settings such as the early years unit of the local primary school or nursery. The childminder is able to provide care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Very good knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that the childminder promotes all aspects of their learning with success. Children are safe and most aspects of their welfare promoted well whilst arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. Informal methods of working with parents are very well-established defining a good working relationship. Partnerships with other settings providing EYFS are a key strength and contribute to ensuring that the transition into future education is successful. The childminder has established procedures for self-evaluation that enable her to recognise strengths and areas for development and implement change for improved outcomes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of assessments to show how they link to initial starting points for children, show the progress which children are making and ensure that parents contribute to the learning process.

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

- ensure that a record of risk assessment is maintained clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation).

30/04/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare of children. The childminder has a firm understanding of issues relating to safeguarding. She extends her knowledge by attending training on topics such as 'creative modelling from scrap' and 'observation and assessment, and she organises a childminder network group; this promotes her continued development. The childminder works very closely with parents, identifying specific needs including dietary, medical and educational early in the arrangement to ensure that children receive appropriate support. The partnership with other settings is a key strength. An example of this is the time spent in settings by the childminder supporting children, for which she has received complimentary references from the setting noting the positive impact on children's learning and development.

The childminder has completed self-evaluation to assist her development and completes informal daily checks of the home to make sure that risks and hazards to children are removed. She also prepares well for outings equipping a bag ready to take with her when away from the home. However, there is no updated record maintained showing any action required or review undertaken.

Resources are organised to enable children to self-select materials and initiate learning. Flexible routines encourage children to enjoy a range of activities within the home and exploration of the local community fosters an awareness of the immediate world around them. They visit Fairlands Valley Lakes where they explore the natural wooded areas, they also take part in recycling in the home using labelled bins later discussing and disposing of refuse they see. Verbal feedback is used very effectively and a daily diary supports this with babies and younger children. The childminder carries out observations linking these to EYFS and identifies next steps. However, there is no process to agree a baseline starting point for children or methods to show progression involving parental input. This means that parents are not fully involved in their children's learning, and that potential learning opportunities may be missed.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that support them in making good progress. Themed activities support children's all-round development. For example, when exploring dolls houses they become enthralled by identifying and setting up specific rooms and areas naming the items found, identifying their purpose, comparing size, shape, colour and type. The same play leads into discussing feelings when finding a 'bride' talking of happiness and anger, later leading into learning about areas of a globe and identifying land, sea and ice. This play also leads to children extending their awareness of the equality of gender as they discuss roles taken within a household. Children play a full role in the choice and preparation of healthy meals, they engage in project works such as the 'change4life' programme learning about nutrition and it's link to health. They are

extremely active each day walking, using bikes, scooters and sledges. Children gain excellent knowledge of the needs of others, such as dietary or medical, through joint discussions and care for each other each day. Children expand their knowledge in all areas of learning through encompassing activities because the childminder is skilled in introducing them to new concepts as they play.

Children take part in creative works enjoying, for instance, making cards for members of the family. They quickly direct the play into demonstrating their knowledge of numbers, letters and sounds. Children happily name letters such as 'K' for kangaroo, 'J' for jam, and 'Q' for queen adding 'Q.U.E.E.N makes Queen'. They enjoy the praise given as they name and sound each letter in turn using their developing knowledge easily. Children explore new topics regularly as they visit the Stevenage museum where they enjoy exploring displays such as 'The Romans', later extending this by research using maps, looking at place names and visiting a neighbouring town to view the 'Icknield Way', an original Roman road.

Children are helped to link past and present and become interested in the wider world. They enjoy celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year and have visited a Chinese supermarket locally to try new foods and extend their nutritional experience. They show interest in script of other cultures and explore Arabic when seeing writing in a Halal butchers shop. Children begin to be aware of other languages through each others families and explore non-verbal communication as the childminder introduces them to signing and books with signing. Observation is completed and links made to EYFS and next steps for each child. Planning has the potential to engage children's interests with some themed activities introduced such as Australia Day, Easter or Snow. However with no system to show progression, or involve parents, children may not be supported to reach their full potential.

Children thrive because they are in a secure environment. They take part in routines that promote their safety, such as emergency evacuation, on a regular basis. They learn about road safety each day when walking and through project work which is displayed in the home showing valuable reminders. Children take part in caring for the household pets becoming aware of both their own and the animals health, and the link to personal hygiene and health. They learn to care for others as older children help younger ones to settle into the home. Children learn to self-manage their behaviour often receiving stars on charts or certificates. These methods all help children develop independence and skills for the future.

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?	1
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?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
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?	2

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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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