

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	251174
Inspection date	18/03/2009
Inspector	Hazel Meadows
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 January 1992. She lives with her husband and four children aged 19, 18, 15, 13 and two grandchildren aged three years and one year old, in a house in east Ipswich. There is one small step to access the premises. Most the ground floor is used for childminding activities, including a dedicated playroom. There is a downstairs cloakroom. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding 13 children overall, most of whom attend part-time, and five of these children are in the early years age group. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends a local childminding group. She walks or drives to local schools and pre-schools to take or collect children and also takes children to local parks, play centres and nearby places of interest.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are offered a broad variety of play and learning experiences, both in the home and on outings, and consequently make good progress. The childminder provides a safe and stimulating, welcoming and child-focussed environment where children thrive. She has a good knowledge of the children's individual needs and well-presented, thorough documentation is in place to ensure their welfare. The childminder maintains very positive and trusting partnerships with parents to ensure continuity of children's care. She is developing methods for monitoring and promoting children's progress towards the early learning goals and is beginning to reflect on her practice to make ongoing improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop systematic observations and assessments for each child, to identify and plan for the next steps in their progress towards the early learning goals
- develop opportunities to work in partnership with parents and other providers delivering the EYFS to promote continuity and progression
- ensure children have opportunities for outdoor play on a daily basis.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises her home, resources and routine very well to meet children's individual needs and consequently, children are happy, well-behaved and relaxed in her home. She has a positive and inclusive attitude and approach to diversity, which is reflected in her policies and some resources. She is attentive to child safety and has clearly written risk assessments for her home and different types of outings. The childminder has a thorough understanding of safeguarding children and has attended relevant training. She is clear of her role and responsibilities and knows what action to take if she had concerns about a child.

The childminder has a secure knowledge of child development and a commitment to ongoing learning and development. All her training is up-to-date, with certificates neatly presented in a folder and she endeavours to be well-informed of current practice. She has addressed the recommendation from her previous inspection, demonstrating the capacity to improve. She has begun to reflect upon her practise by completing a self-evaluation form, clearly recognising the value of identifying strengths and highlighting areas for development. The childminder is at the early stages of developing a method to observe and assess children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), to effectively plan for the next steps in their learning and development. She has not yet involved parents with this, or developed partnerships with other providers delivering the EYFS, to promote continuity and progression.

The childminder develops very trusting partnerships with parents and their comments and feedback are welcomed, which is demonstrated by recent, very positive testimonies in a folder. She encourages frequent two-way communication to ensure each child's individual needs are met. The childminder has written her own clear and comprehensive policies, which are shared with parents and reflected in her daily practise. Each parent receives an introductory booklet containing the main policies and additional information about her family and practise. The childminder gathers essential details about the children and has signed, written parental consents to ensure children are cared for according to their parent's wishes. All documentation is very clear, thorough and neatly presented ensuring it is readily available. Photo folders, containing a visual record of activities done by each child, are maintained and shared with the parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have lots of fun and are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They are confident and relaxed and communicate freely with the childminder, her family and one another. Children make their own choices from the wealth of easily accessible, good quality toys and resources in the dedicated playroom and are keen to explore what is available. Children predominantly play in the playroom but good use is made of the kitchen for messy play, using child sized furniture, whilst school-aged children prefer the lounge, where they can relax after school. The childminder encourages learning through fun activities and children benefit from many hands-on experiences. The routine and activities offered are flexible to

accommodate the children's own ideas and requests, providing a balance of adult and child-led activities. However, the observation of and planning for individual progress, to ensure each child receives sufficient challenge across all areas of learning, is limited.

Children have many opportunities to engage in creative play and are regularly offered craft activities. The childminder and her family play at the children's level with the messy play and more reluctant children gradually gain the confidence to participate and explore for themselves. For example, all the children were enthralled by the gloop and played with it for some considerable time, noting the different consistency as more water or cornflour was added and using lots of descriptive language, encouraged by the childminder. Children competently use tools with the playdough, rolling and cutting with increasing skill and ask questions about the different shapes. Small world toys, dolls, pushchairs and dressing-up clothes support and encourage children's imaginative play.

Children have some opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they play on larger equipment at local parks and play centres or walk to and from school or pre-school. Ride on toys and slides in the garden increase children's physical competence and confidence; however, opportunities for regular outdoor play in the garden are not fully utilised. Children are able to explore their local and wider community and socialise with others through visits to local childcare groups and outings further afield to farms, the beach and the zoo. Children develop a positive attitude to differences through the childminder's inclusive approach and some books and resources reflect positive images of diversity. However, the childminder has identified and recognises this as an area for ongoing development and further exploration with the children, to encourage them to value and appreciate diversity around them.

Children's behaviour is very good as they respond well to reasonable boundaries and clear explanations from the childminder and positive behaviour is rewarded with praise and encouragement. They develop good hygiene routines and know why it is important to wash their hands after toileting and prior to eating. Parents provide children's main meals but the childminder promotes healthy eating habits and offers snacks of fruit, cheese and crackers. Drinks are readily available to the children to ensure they are well hydrated. Children increase their understanding of how to keep themselves safe through regularly reinforced routines, such as road safety and through reminders and explanations from the childminder.

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?	3
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?	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
---	-----

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.