

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	404325
Inspection date	23/04/2009
Inspector	Susan Ennis
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 registered in 1993. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and 17 years in Puckeridge, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Accessibility to the premises is via one small step. The family has one dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four 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 one child in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder offers a mostly safe, secure and welcoming environment in which children thrive. She offers continuity of care often caring for children from when they were very young babies. She builds a trusting relationship with the parents to ensure that all children's individual needs are met. The childminder's effective approach to planning ensures that the children's interests and development are well-promoted and that they enjoy their time with her. She has made a good start to self-evaluating her practice and is aware of her strengths and areas for improvement. Therefore, she is able to make effective changes to improve the daily care and experiences for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systems to show children's progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure that children's exact times of arrival and departure are recorded
- ensure that all fire detection and control equipment is in working order. Refers to the position of the fire blanket.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding policies and procedures ensure that children are well-protected at all times. For example, the childminder has planned additional update training to increase her knowledge of child protection and has all the required contact numbers for concerns. The childminder uses clear and practical procedures for monitoring the environment enabling the children to move around the setting freely. She carries out daily visual safety checks of the premises and more detailed risk assessments on a regular basis. She also regularly practices the emergency fire drill with the children, protecting them further. However, as the fire blanket is

not correctly positioned and children's actual times of arrival and departure are not always correctly recorded children's safety is potentially affected. The childminder has made a good start to evaluating her practice. She completed the self-evaluation form before inspection and regularly discusses the service she provides with the parents seeking their views and opinions. She has identified her strengths and areas for improvement and has demonstrated her capacity to improve since the last inspection.

The children's individual development is well-promoted because the childminder has practical procedures in place to monitor and evaluate their learning and progress. A professional and trusting relationship with parents and the other settings attended by the children ensures that all relevant information is shared. The use of photographs and assessment records help those involved further the children's progression. An effective prospectus ensures that parents are fully informed about the childminder's policies and procedures including the complaints procedure.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are consistently offered a wide range of opportunities that support them in making good progress in all areas of learning and development. The use of flexible planning ensures that children's likes and dislikes are taken into account and that they thoroughly enjoy themselves in the environment provided. When children are hesitant in concentrating to do a puzzle a childminder incorporates it into the nursery role play activity that the children are playing. The childminder asks the children for help with the puzzle as 'you are the teacher and know where the pieces go.' Once the children have placed one piece correctly, their confidence and enthusiasm increases so much that they go on to complete the puzzle successfully. Information from observation and assessment is well used to ensure that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities and that their next steps are catered for. For example, a visit to the local swimming pool encourages the children's physical development as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world as they discuss the cold water and how things float. The next steps are then planned with another visit to the pool to further increase the children's confidence in the water. However, their progress towards the early learning goals is not always clear to see from the current documentation provided and therefore areas of concern or for further challenge may not be highlighted.

The childminder ensures that the weekly planning offers the children a balanced and broad range of activities, both inside and outside the home, that are fun, supported and encourage them to learn through play. The childminder also encourages the children to try new experiences to challenge and extend their development. For example, when children are not confident to move from a small slide to a larger one at the soft play centre, the childminder supports them by taking them down the slide firstly on her lap, then holding hands side by side and so on until the children's confidence has grown enabling them to come down it on their own. Children make good use of the stimulating range of resources available to them. They use the doctors set to look in the childminder's ear proclaiming 'it's

really sore'. They then use the stethoscope to listen to her chest saying 'take a breath and cough' before declaring that 'it's not good' and giving the 'patient' some 'medicine.' They then further develop their imagination skills by pretending to be a hair dressing cutting the childminder's hair and charging her for the experience.

All children are treated with equal concern and respected individually. Their understanding of the wider world is promoted because their cultural awareness is actively promoted. The childminder is able to care for all children and promotes an inclusive environment. Children clearly enjoy their time with the childminder and have forged friendly relationships with her and their friends who come to visit, for example, getting a pram and doll ready for them to play with when they visit later in the day. Children are encouraged to use appropriate behaviour and are praised and encouraged by the childminder who, as a positive role model helps them make the right choices.

Children's health and welfare are effectively promoted as the childminder takes steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop the children's understanding of healthy living. They learn to wash their hands before eating and after touching the family dog and are encouraged to eat healthily. When the childminder runs out of ready made smoothies she suggests making one using the blender. She asks the children which fruits they would like to use and suggests using juice instead of milk for a change which the children obviously agree with as they thoroughly enjoy the drink.

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

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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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