

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY381981
Inspection date	06/05/2009
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
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 has been registered since October 2008 and lives in the Stukeley Meadows area of Huntingdon with her husband and their child aged two years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for up to five children under eight. There are currently three children on roll all of whom are in the early years age group.

Minded children mainly use the ground floor of the home, which includes ground floor toilet facilities. There is an enclosed back garden for outdoor play. The childminder lives within walking distance of a primary school, pre-school settings and outdoor play areas. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is good. The childminder creates a welcoming and inclusive environment for children and their families. Children are actively engaged in a broad range of activities that ensure they enjoy their time in the setting and make generally good progress in all the areas of learning. There is an established and positive working relationship with parents that ensures they are kept well-informed about their child's welfare and development. The childminder is beginning to implement systems to effectively evaluate the provision and she is committed to continually improving outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop in order to enhance their progress in all the areas of learning according to their age and stage of development
- improve risk assessments to include everything children encounter, this refers to assessing the safety of resources and activities, such as using the trampoline.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has well-established, positive partnerships with parents; she works with them to gather good information about each child to ensure their individual interests and needs are effectively met. Positive feedback shows parents have a high regard for the childminder and the service she offers. The childminder has implemented a self-evaluation process and is beginning to look at areas for development as well as the many strengths of the provision. This helps to ensure children continue to have good quality experiences and can make good progress in the areas of learning.

The childminder ensures children are supervised at all times as they move around the secure home and garden. Written risk assessments are in place, and these are generally effective in identifying safe practices both within the home and on outings. However, they do not take into account some of the resources and activities that children participate in, such as the trampoline, which means they are not fully protected.

Essential documentation is well-organised and kept up-to-date in order to promote the welfare of children. A good range of policies and procedures, including safeguarding children and how to make a complaint, is shared with parents to ensure they are well informed about the provision. The childminder organises space and play resources effectively to meet all children's needs and offers them a warm, comfortable and welcoming home.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder's provides children with an environment that is stimulating and well planned so that children can access toys easily and safely, which promotes their confidence and independence. Children learn about keeping safe because the childminder provides explanations about their actions, such as why they should sit on the slide, rather than come down on their tummies. Children play together happily and are learning to share and take turns. The childminder promotes their good behaviour through positive role modelling, for instance, she asks them for their opinions and ideas and listens attentively to them. When they behave well she praises them warmly, which ensures they develop good self-esteem.

Children are provided with good opportunities and experiences to help them make progress across all the areas of learning and development according to their own unique abilities. The childminder knows the children well and this enables her to provide activities that they all find interesting and challenging. Planning is flexible so children's own ideas and disposition can be taken into account, for example, impromptu outings to the park can take precedence over another planned activity because that is what children prefer. The childminder has recently introduced written assessment records in order to chart children's progress and plan for the next stages in their learning, these are shared with parents so they can take an active part in their children's progress.

Overall, the childminder has a good understanding of how children develop and learn through play and therefore enables children to progress well in all the areas of learning, but she lacks knowledge in some areas, for instance, she uses upper case letters and the alphabet in sequence when teaching children initial writing skills. Potentially, this limits her ability to enable children to fully develop their skills appropriately. Nonetheless, children are developing their early literacy and communication skills well because the childminder makes sure they have lots of opportunities to look at books and listen to stories and rhymes. Children have plenty of tools to promote their mark making skills, such as pencils, felt tips and brushes and enjoy using resources like playdough and small construction sets to help their small muscle control.

Children learn about their local community as they visit parks and play areas and socialise with their peers at activity groups. The childminder helps children develop their understanding of the wider world by exploring books about other countries, dressing up clothes and arts and crafts. Children have a good introduction to mathematical concepts such as counting and number recognition through everyday routines, for example, they help to weigh and measure ingredients for cooking. They operate simple equipment such as electronic keyboards or pop-up toys. These activities lay the foundations to support the children's future economic well-being. A well equipped garden encourages children to develop positive attitudes towards physical activity as they bounce on the trampoline, or use the swing and slide.

Children benefit from a good range of nutritious snacks, such as fresh fruit and vegetables. The childminder is aware of the importance of gathering information on children's dietary needs and this ensures children eat safe and suitable foods, she offers a flexible service and can provide nutritious meals according to parents' wishes. Children's good health is effectively promoted by sensible hygiene routines. The childminder encourages hand washing and gives children explanations so they know that 'germs need to be washed off'. Drinks are readily accessible at all times so children can satisfy their thirst 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

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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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