

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	300194
Inspection date	09/06/2009
Inspector	Sarah Gilpin
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 1983. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in a detached property in Sheffield that is close to local shops, parks and schools where she collects children. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is access to a toilet on that level. Children have access to a fully enclosed area for outdoor play to the rear of the property. The family has a cat.

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 four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

She holds a level 3 qualification and is a member of the local childminding group and the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is good. The childminder meets the needs of the children in her care because she has a good awareness of their differing requirements and their individual likes and dislikes. All children are warmly welcomed into the setting and a varied range of fun activities and experiences promotes their learning and development. She is well organised so that the children's welfare is promoted. There are positive relationships with the parents and carers and links have been forged over many years with the local schools and nursery, which supports consistency and ensures children's welfare is maintained. The childminder reflects on what she provides for the children. she has dealt effectively with the recommendations from the last inspection and understands the process of self-evaluation as a tool to further develop the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the existing system for observation and assessment of the children, in order to more clearly highlight the next steps in their learning and plan and provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- become more familiar with diversity to extend children's knowledge of cultures within and beyond the setting.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has embraced the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage and as such has implemented changes in her setting to ensure that she complies with the requirements. For example, she has attended a number of workshops on the framework including; Completing the Self Evaluation Form, 'Enabling environments' and 'Observation and assessment', all of which have contributed to her familiarity and positive approach. As a result, there are clear written policies and procedures to support the safe management of the setting and maintain the children's welfare and the comprehensive risk assessments demonstrate the childminder's commitment to keeping children safe. These include an up-to-date assessment of risks in the garden as the childminder has some remedial work completed. There are clear procedures for the recording of accidents and any medication given to the children, additionally the childminder has completed a first aid qualification to ensure she deals with accidents appropriately.

The large homely environment provides children with a abundance of space to move around, toys, equipment and resources are stored safely at their level to promote their independence. The childminder has used the Ofsted self-evaluation to reflect on her practice and the care she provides for the children, and through this process has highlighted some areas to develop further. This includes developing her knowledge of diversity further to ensure she can help children to learn and about and respect other people.

There are positive relationships with the parents and carers, information is routinely shared with them and displayed around the home. The childminder has begun to complete diaries of the children's time in her care and there are plans to share these with the parents. She has been operating for in excess of 20 years and in that time has built good relationships with the alternative care providers, such as the local school and nursery, which enable her to ensure children's care is consistent and her service is complementary.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The children thoroughly enjoy being in this caring and child-centred environment. They explore the space around them, either walking or crawling around and seek comfort and cuddles from the childminder when needed. The older children are helped to recognise the needs of the younger ones, for example when the baby is resting the older child is encouraged to play more quietly. In addition, the safety of younger children is managed effectively by encouraging play with items that have small pieces in a separate area. Children learn about good manners through gentle reminders and good role modelling from the childminder. At snack time the children are offered brown toast and diluted juice, which they eagerly tuck into. There is a good discussion about what they should have for lunch and the children are provided with choices of healthy but simple foods. Children's dietary needs are known to ensure that any food provided are suitable for them.

The childminder talks to the children constantly as they play together and this encourages their growing vocabularies. She asks them questions to help them think about what they are doing and extend their learning. The clear routine for the day includes adult directed play and free choice. Part of the routine is for the older children to watch an educational television programme before snack and the childminder links further learning to what the children have watched. For example, when they are singing and making music later in the day they talk about the thunder on the programme. Children show their problem solving skills as they match and sort eggs in a tray. They use the secure garden for physical play opportunities and they have been planting and tending the flowers. When the younger children are finding their feet there are many resources and items of furniture for them to pull themselves up to practice their standing and balance. Children's creativity is fostered well through planned craft activities and resources for them to pretend and play imaginatively with. The children enjoy moulding the playdough into desired shapes, rolling it flat or into a ball. They like to share in talking about themselves as they look at photographs of themselves engaged in different activities.

The childminder has recently implemented a system to observe and assess what the children in her care can do. This information is recorded in assessment folders and is beginning to provide lively narratives about the children's development. In addition, she is making diaries for each child, which detail their achievements through written information and photographic evidence. The childminder recognises that this process is relatively new to her and shows an awareness of how to develop this further by linking more clearly to the steps children take to reach the early learning goals and highlighting their individual next steps to plan activities around.

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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