

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	314786
Inspection date	06/05/2009
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged 15 and 12 years in Croft, Warrington, close to shops, parks, schools and pre-schools. The whole of the ground floor and bedrooms one and four on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

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 caring for three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged from five to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is available to provide care each weekday, on a full-time basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. Children benefit from warm and caring relationships with the childminder who routinely meets their immediate needs. However, children's ability to make progress in their learning and development is restricted by the childminder's limited knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Informal relationships with parents are reported to be good, but insufficient information is shared in respect of the childminder's policies and procedures or the children's learning and development. The childminder does not have any systems in place to evaluate or monitor her provision for children's welfare, learning and development, although some action has been taken in respect of actions raised at the last inspection.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- undertake sensitive observational assessments in order to highlight children's achievements or their need for further support and use them to plan the next steps in children's learning (Learning and development) 29/05/2009
- plan and provide experiences and resources which are appropriate to each child's stage of development and help them make progress towards the early learning goals (Organisation) 29/05/2009
- provide parents with details of policies and procedures, for example, complaints, safeguarding, 29/05/2009

- equality of opportunity (Safeguarding and welfare)
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum (Suitable premises, environment & equipment).

29/05/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- establish an effective two-way flow of information with parents and other providers to promote progression and continuity of learning and care, including strategies for managing children's behaviour
- develop a process of self evaluation in order to monitor the effectiveness of the setting and identify areas for improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is experienced in caring for young children, but attention to training and development is poor. In response to actions raised at the previous inspection, the childminder attended a relevant training course which has increased her awareness of the six areas of learning, but has had little impact on the provision for children's learning and development. Sufficient action has been taken in respect of most other actions, however, the new policies the childminder has devised are not shared with parents so they are not aware of her procedure for safeguarding children or her complaints procedure.

As required at the last inspection, steps have been taken to ensure the children's safety in relation to the issues identified. However, in respect of other areas, the childminder relies heavily on close supervision to keep the children safe. As a result, children are unable to move around her home freely without being exposed to hazards. For example, the childminder has taken no action to minimise hazards associated with the stairs, consequently, children cannot leave the kitchen to access alternative play materials in the living room. Also, after washing their hands for lunch, children are instructed not to enter the kitchen because cleaning materials are accessible in a low-level cupboard. Such constraints limit the available play space and restrict children's choices. Attention to children's safety on outings is good; detailed risk assessments are implemented to ensure children's safety. The childminder has a satisfactory knowledge of safeguarding issues and is able to implement appropriate procedures to protect a child from possible harm.

The childminder promotes relaxed and informal relationships with parents and much information is shared informally. The childminder has recently devised a parental questionnaire for parents which clearly shows they are very satisfied with the care she provides. However, they are not adequately informed about many aspects of the childminder's provision, including policies and procedures. They have insufficient opportunities to share what they know about their child's learning and development and are not well informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals. Too little information is exchanged in respect of behavioural issues or to ensure children get additional support to help them make progress. The childminder does not work with other providers delivering the EYFS

to ensure progression or continuity in children's learning, although she is aware of the topics children are covering in their respective school or pre-school setting.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are settled and enjoy secure relationships with the childminder. They are warmly welcomed into the childminder's home and have adequate space to play in the centre of the childminder's living room. The childminder provides a suitable range of play materials which generally occupy the children and help them make some progress in their learning and development. For example, children spontaneously complete developmentally appropriate puzzles and enjoy colouring at the table. The childminder is a positive role model who speaks gently to the children and provides consistent boundaries for them. She is aware of and implements positive behaviour strategies, as a result children are learning right from wrong. However, strategies for dealing with escalating unwanted or challenging behaviour, including liaising with parents, are not well developed.

Attention to health and safety is generally good. Children are learning about the importance of good hygiene through routine hand washing, and hygiene procedures in respect of nappy changing and children's bedding are satisfactory. Children are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and enjoy nutritious home cooked meals, such as roast chicken, potatoes and vegetables at lunch time. Drinking water is continually available and healthy snacks are provided during the day. However, mealtimes are not valued as a learning experience and little is done to promote children's self help skills or independence. For example, older children are routinely given a spoon to eat with and drink from a feeder cup. They are also inappropriately seated in a low 'highchair' type seat. Consequently, their legs dangle over the footrest and they are positioned at a much lower level than children in highchairs or adults sitting at the table, which limits any social interaction.

As a result of general observations and playing with the children, for example, looking at books, singing nursery rhymes or counting in everyday situations, the childminder has a basic awareness of their overall development. However, the childminder's process for formal observations or assessments is weak and only highlights particular achievements. There is no system in place to ensure children's progress in each of the areas of learning is monitored. The childminder's system of only noting achievements means there are no observations linked to areas of learning where children are making less progress or require additional support, for example, communication, language and literacy. Some plans for children's future learning are identified when observations are completed, these are linked to specific areas of learning, but planning in other areas is very limited.

There is no system to establish children's starting points, which coupled with the childminder's limited observational assessments means the childminder is unable to effectively monitor children's progress or plan for their future learning. Provision for outdoor play is satisfactory and the children particularly enjoy some of the childminder's very large and challenging outdoor equipment, which they use under close supervision and with parental agreement.

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?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	4

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	4
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	4
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	4
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	4
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	4
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	4
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	4

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- make available to parents copies of the written statements of safeguarding procedures and complaints procedures (CR9.1) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

22/05/2009

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified above in the compulsory Childcare Register section of the report (CR9.1).

22/05/2009