

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	123847
Inspection date	20/05/2009
Inspector	Lindsay Hare
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 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged 18, 14 and 11 years in Waltham Cross. The whole of the ground floor and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding and there is a secure garden for outside play. The family have fish in a tank. The childminder cares for children during term-time and school holidays.

A maximum of four children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently three children who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The provision is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and the childminder is caring for no children within this group.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder provides a safe and welcoming environment for all the children and ensures that they are included and supported. Partnerships with parents are positive and procedures ensure that they are kept well-informed ensuring that their individual needs are met. Children enjoy their time at the setting and the childminder actively engages with them, generally helping them to make steady progress in their learning and development, supported by the evolving planning and assessment arrangements. The childminder keeps herself up-to-date with early years through the attendance of training such as a safeguarding children course amongst others, which was a recommendation from the last inspection. Therefore, she has the capacity to maintain continuous improvement and develop the quality of the provision for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all policies and procedures are up-to-date and refer to Early Years Foundation Stage
- develop the system for monitoring and evaluating the provision in order to improve practice
- improve the planning for activities in response to individual children's next steps and to ensure children have experiences across all the areas of learning

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, care and safety are promoted well. All of the required documentation is in place for the safe and efficient running of the setting. Clear

policies and procedures outline the important aspects of the service, although some written policies and procedures are not up-to-date and still refer to the National Standards. This may mean that parents receive conflicting information about the provision which is incorrect. The childminder has a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues and recognises her role and responsibilities in keeping children safe from harm. She has obtained the relevant consents from parents to ensure children are well protected such as permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Children are able to move freely around the premises because the childminder takes effective steps to minimise hazards and supervises them at all times. Daily safety checks are completed before children arrive, in addition to comprehensive risk assessments of the premises, garden and any outings that the children participate in.

The childminder's professional and friendly approach to maintaining effective partnerships with parents ensures that the care she provides for children is consistently promoted. There are good systems in place to share information and keep parents informed about their children's care and progress, through daily discussion and the sharing of children's records. Detailed information is gathered from parents when they start about the child's care, routine and preferences so that the childminder can care for them effectively. Parents' contributions are valued and the childminder embraces individual needs such as children who have English as an additional language, through learning relevant words from parents that she uses when talking to the children. The childminder has completed a self-evaluation which identifies some areas for improvement in order to improve her practice; however, the process of monitoring and evaluating her provision is not fully established. The childminder is keen to develop her skills and knowledge to raise standards and improve the outcomes for children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have good opportunities to help them make steady progress in their learning and development through a balanced range of activities and resources. The childminder clearly knows the individual children well and makes observations of them as they play, which are shown to parents. Assessment records include evidence of children's work, observations and photographs and record children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, this assessment is not used to plan the next steps for children in their learning. Although activities are provided in accordance with children's interests, the limited planning arrangements mean that children may miss opportunities to experience activities across all areas of learning, therefore hindering their progression. Children have access to resources and they are able to select from low-level boxes, encouraging them to make choices and support their independence.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and have developed warm, affectionate relationships with her. This contributes to their sense of belonging and gives them confidence and security to explore their environment. Children benefit from consistent daily routines, which help them settle and feel secure. They enjoy positive interaction with the childminder and other members of the family. The childminder offers them good support during their play and

learning, encouraging them to develop and extend their skills. For example, young children develop their language skills because the childminder involves them in lots of conversation. She models correct language as they attempt to copy sounds and words without discouraging their efforts and then reinforces these developing skills in children by participating in a game of 'I Spy' with them. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through routines and discussions, they know to wash their hands before meals, how to cross the road safely and how to evacuate the home because they practice fire drills regularly. Children are given boundaries and explanations as to why something is dangerous and this helps them to understand how to keep themselves safe.

All children are treated with equal concern and respected individually. They have daily access to a range of play resources and books which provide positive images of diversity and also books that help children to deal with experiences such as moving house, having asthma and using an inhaler. They learn about the local community through regular outings where opportunities to learn about differences and the wider world are provided. Children are beginning to explore other cultures, such as taking part in a Croatian Christmas celebration in January. They enjoy looking at books and put their own story CD's on as well as listening and dancing to music. The older children in the Early Years age group are able to write letters in response to the sounds and are beginning to write some words independently, sounding the phonics themselves as they write them. There are good opportunities to develop mathematical skills as they play counting games and weigh food at the shops. Children initiate their own play and have opportunities to be creative, engaging in pretend play with the dolls, getting them dressed and sitting them on the potty. Children experience the benefits of fresh air and exercise as they walk to and from school daily and use bats and balls and the ride-on toys at the childminding group. They learn about healthy foods and know that drinking water and getting enough sleep are good for them, through discussions with the childminder. Children plant their own cress and sunflower seeds, encouraging them to investigate and explore the natural world. They interact well with each other and the older ones enjoy helping and taking care of the younger children. They behave extremely well because they are busily occupied and their needs are met.

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.	3

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?	3
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?	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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