

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	222862
Inspection date	14/04/2009
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged 12, 15 and 19 years in a residential area of St Ives, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access into and out of the childminder's home is at ground level and there are downstairs toilet facilities.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. There are currently six children on roll, two of whom are within the early years age range. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 12 years and the provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, shops and parks.

The childminder is working towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder promotes inclusive practice, treating all children as individuals and respecting their different interests, needs and learning styles through the broad range of activities and resources that she provides both indoors and outdoors. Systems to monitor children's progress and achievements are well established and effective, therefore ensuring that all children make good progress in their learning and development.

The childminder fosters close working relationships with parents and provides them with good information about her service and their child's care and learning. The childminder demonstrates a firm commitment to continually developing and improving the provision for all children. She has effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate her practice and she clearly identifies key strengths and areas for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance the accessibility of toys and resources available to children for their free-play.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has fully embraced the introduction of the Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with particular regard to the learning environment that she creates

for children. For example, she has developed the use of the outdoors enabling the children free access between the garden and indoors. However, the accessibility of toys and resources able to be selected by children during their free play activities is currently less effective as some are stored in the garage or out of reach of children.

Documentation is very well organised and a wide range of written policies and procedures are effective in promoting children's health, safety and welfare. The childminder has a secure awareness of safeguarding procedures and she shares her written policy with all parents. She is committed to improving her knowledge and awareness of relevant issues, such as safeguarding, equal opportunities, positive behaviour and children's social and emotional development through further training. Children's safety is a priority and this is continually assessed by undertaking thorough risk assessments of her premises, outdoor area and all outings undertaken with children. As a result, children are cared for in a safe environment.

The childminder has a clear awareness of her own provision and identifies areas for improvement where necessary. This is achieved through robust self-evaluation systems and through working towards the successful completion of a quality assurance scheme. She has taken positive action to address recommendations made at the last inspection which has helped to further promote an inclusive setting by finding out about minded children's own religious and cultural preferences and by ensuring positive messages regarding diversity are filtered through activities and the toys, resources and images children use and see in their everyday play.

Parents receive good information about the childminding service and their child's care and education. Parents are provided with copies of all policies and procedures and a regular newsletter keeps them informed of training undertaken by the childminder and new toys and equipment. Daily diaries provide clear information about children's activities and routines. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning and development for example, by sharing words in their home language, recording their own observations in their child's EYFS 'Tracker book', by contributing resources such as recyclable materials or fruit to share at snack time or by borrowing favourite toys to extend the child's interest and enjoyment at home. The childminder has a positive attitude to liaising with other providers delivering the EYFS to children in her care. For example, she provides summative details of children's learning and development to their key workers before they start at another setting and intends to continue this positive relationship to ensure consistency of care and learning between settings.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are consistently offered good learning opportunities and activities both indoors and in the outdoor environment that enable them to make very good progress across all areas of learning. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of how children learn; they are encouraged to become active learners and good use is made of the outdoors to offer practical and engaging

activities and experiences such as picking flowers, planting seeds, exploring leaves, enjoying sit and ride toys, using the designated digging area or visiting the family's allotment.

Planning and assessment arrangements are well established and very effective. Planning derives from the children's interests and next steps of learning which ensures that activities are meaningful to the children. Weekly activity sheets ensure that equal emphasis is given to each area of learning. Planning is flexible to ensure that children are able to take activities in their own direction. Regular observations are undertaken and recorded in individual learning folders and their overall progress towards the early learning goals is monitored in EYFS 'Tracker books'. The childminder interacts effectively with children; she is skilled at knowing when to offer her support and when to allow children independence to freely explore. For example, a well read story provides children with opportunities to join in with repeated refrains and answer simple questions which enhances their language development. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported in their all round development, for example, parents are encouraged to share key words in their home language for use in the setting.

Children are confident, keen to learn and have developed a real sense of belonging in the childminder's home. They are encouraged to have a positive image of themselves, their family and the wider community through a good range of resources and images that reflect diversity. Children mark-make for different purposes for example, painting the fence in the garden, writing names on post-it notes and labelling their own plant pots. They readily engage in discussion about their family and are able to express their ideas and views to others. Early numeracy skills are promoted during everyday routines such as counting the children at the snack table and seeds as they are planted. They are beginning to solve problems for example as they are asked to find the 'square' button to turn the music off. They learn order as they plant seeds; selecting a pot, filling it with compost and labelling the pot. Children are curious and knowledgeable about how things work. For example, they help to change music compact discs in the player. They are encouraged to explore their senses for example as they smell rose petals, garlic, rosemary and other herbs. Children enjoy physical activity and regular fresh air through daily walks, many opportunities to use the garden and visits to the park where the play equipment is able to provide suitable challenge for younger children. Children's creativity is highly valued and children benefit from the childminders understanding of her role as facilitator where she helps children achieve their aims and explore their ideas without directing what the end result should be. For example, children use recyclable materials to make their own creations and engage in role play using baskets of props and dressing up resources to support their ideas.

The childminder is very aware of her responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. She provides a safe, clean and welcoming home for children to relax and play in comfortably. She actively encourages children to keep themselves well and safe from harm, by practising fire safety evacuations and discussing safety on outings. For example, photos are used to display the route to and from school with safety rules. House safety rules encourage older children to consider the safety of the younger children for example, remembering to pick up small parts

from the floor and providing good role models as they sit to eat and ensure they use equipment safely. Children are encouraged to follow good hygiene routines such as brushing their teeth and washing their hands before snack time and after using the toilet. They use liquid soap and individually labelled hand towels which reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Their health is promoted through the provision of nutritious meals and snacks such as blackberries brought in by a parent and they are able help themselves to their cups when they need a drink. Menus take full account of children's individual needs and preferences. The childminder has a good understanding of behaviour management. For example, she is patient and calm as she encourages younger children to work alongside others in an acceptable manner, to share and take turns.

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.