

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	222237
Inspection date	01/06/2009
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 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 1992. She lives with her husband on the outskirts of Cambridge. 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. Toilet facilities are upstairs.

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 three children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. The provision is also 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, the library, shops and parks. The family keep goldfish.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and is working towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. The childminder creates a generally safe and welcoming environment for children; they are happy and settled in her care. Children make suitable progress in their learning and development as the childminder provides an appropriate range of activities and uses informal systems of observations and assessments to ensure that she is aware of their individual learning needs. There is a close working relationship with the parents, ensuring there is consistency in meeting children's individual needs. The childminder is in the early stages of monitoring and assessing the service she provides alongside her early years advisor.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that any written policies being used and implemented, contain the required information
- develop systems of observation and assessment to enable effective sharing of information relating to children's learning and achievements as they progress towards the early learning goals
- develop systems of self-evaluation, this relates to identifying specific priorities for improvement and further development, stating how these will be achieved and how the impact on children will be assessed.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks, this relates specifically to

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the positioning of the lock on the upstairs bathroom door and the accessible blind cord (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register).

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's home is sufficiently well organised to help children have opportunities to become independent as they freely access low-level toys and resources from the conservatory. Children are suitably protected because the childminder has a secure understanding of the safeguarding procedures and knows what to do in the event of any concerns. Children are cared for within a generally safe environment as the childminder effectively identifies and minimises most hazards within the home, keeping a written record of the risk assessment she conducts of the premises and garden. For example, cleaning products and sharp knives are kept in child locked cupboards and drawers and part of the garden has been fenced off to ensure that children can be well supervised when outdoors. However, the low positioning of the upstairs bathroom lock and the accessibility of the blind cord pose a potential risk to children's safety.

The childminder has established sound partnerships with parents. This ensures that children's needs are identified and met as they work together to support children's care. For example, daily discussions with parents enables the childminder to share information with them about their child's day and any particular achievements. An informative notice board in the conservatory enables parents to access information relating to the childminder's provision. The childminder is developing her own written policies to share with parents from sample copies she has obtained. However, some of the policies she has formulated do not contain the required information, for example, the safeguarding children policy does not reflect the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) guidelines. Parents speak highly of the care offered by the childminder. The childminder recognises the benefits of building positive relationships with other local provisions that children attend in order to promote consistency of care.

The childminder is beginning to understand the need to implement systems to evaluate her practice. For example, she is beginning to complete the Quality Framework document with her early years advisor. However, whilst the childminder is able to identify the strengths of her provision, she is less clear in identifying specific priorities for improvement and further development. Recommendations from the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder ensures that children enjoy a suitable range of activities both inside her home, in the outdoor environment and at a local toddler group. She has a sound understanding of learning through play and supports children appropriately as they explore the toys and resources in her home. For example,

she reads books to them and encourages them to explore electronic toys such as the digital cash register, encouraging children to 'scan' items and to count out play money and food. She responds positively to them as they express their feelings; when they require reassurance or when they become tired, giving them a cuddle so that they feel relaxed enough to fall asleep. Planning and assessment procedures are informal. Planning is flexible according to the children's wishes and interests. The childminder uses the observations that she visually makes on the children to satisfactorily promote their learning through the activities she provides. However, these informal methods make it difficult to effectively and clearly share information relating to children's overall learning, their achievements and the progress they are making towards each of the early learning goals, particularly with other providers if the need arises in the future.

Children's communication skills are satisfactorily promoted as the childminder talks to them about what they are doing, asks them questions and introduces new vocabulary during play. They begin to solve problems as they work out how 'push and go' toys work and look for missing objects in their activities such as the train driver. Children are interested in how things work for example as they upturn a toy train to spin the wheels around. Children begin to understand about the world around them, for example, as they watch the trains at the nearby track or visit the chickens that live locally. They take care of their newly planted sunflowers helping to water them and watch them grow. Children are able to appreciate diversity through a suitable range of activities, such as learning key words in the different languages spoken by minded children and being introduced to sign language through suitable children's television programmes. Children enjoy a suitable range of physical activities; they regularly visit the park, play ball games in the garden and enjoy dancing inside if the weather is unfavourable.

The childminder encourages children to keep safe. She explains the safe use of toys, for example, opening and closing the cash register drawer carefully so that it doesn't trap their fingers. She practises fire evacuation procedures with the children so that they are able to feel confident in the event of an emergency. Appropriate hygiene routines are maintained to promote children's good health. For example, children's hands are wiped before eating snack and after feeding the goldfish and nappy changing procedures are effective in reducing the risk of cross contamination. Parents are asked to provide main meals for their children and the childminder discusses healthy options with them so that they are aware of her responsibility towards promoting healthy eating. To this end, the childminder provides snacks of fresh fruit for the children and always ensures that their personal beakers of fresh drinking water are both accessible to them at all times and refreshed frequently during periods of hot weather. Generally effective procedures are in place for recording accidents and medication and the childminder ensures she is able to respond appropriately if children have an accident as she has maintained a valid first aid qualification. The childminder demonstrates a suitable understanding of behaviour management.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
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?	3
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?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

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?	3
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?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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:

- put in place a written statement of procedures to be followed in relation to complaints which relate to the requirements of the Childcare Register and which a parent makes in writing or by email (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 15/06/2009
- take action as specified in the Early Years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment). 15/06/2009

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 on the compulsory part of the childcare register (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 15/06/2009
- take action as specified in the Early Years section of the report (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment). 15/06/2009