

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY306430
Inspection date	11/05/2009
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
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 2005. She lives with her husband and three children, aged two, 16 and 18 years, in Lowestoft, Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor and a bedroom on the first floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding and a secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The premises are accessed via the front entrance which has a low step and there are toilet facilities on the ground floor. The family has four chickens as pets.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of five children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time, and of these, no more than two children may be in the early years age range. The childminder regularly works with an assistant. When working with an assistant, the childminder may care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years. There are currently nine children attending on a part-time basis. Four of these children are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. Children live in the local area and some also attend sessions at a nearby pre-school. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years, both before and after school, and during school holidays.

The childminder escorts children to and from the local primary school and attends several toddler and childminder drop-in groups with the children on a regular basis. She is a member of an approved childminding network.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are happy and settled in the safe, welcoming and inclusive environment of the childminder's home. The childminder works effectively in partnership with parents, helping to ensure that valuable information is exchanged and each child's individual needs are met. Children make good progress in their learning and development as they are offered a range of play opportunities, most of which are focused on their interests and next steps in learning. Continuous improvement is generally well promoted through the childminder's commitment to accessing ongoing training and her developing self-evaluation processes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider using a wider range of quality improvement tools to develop the self-evaluation processes further
- identify the next steps in children's learning clearly in the developmental records, and ensure these are systematically linked to the aspects of learning and development in the EYFS
- strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and

faiths, and those of others, by sharing and celebrating a wider range of practices and special events.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is committed to meeting the needs of the children and their families, and values their views on the service she provides. For example, the childminder actively seeks feedback from parents by issuing parental questionnaires and fostering daily discussions about her practice. The childminder is reflective in her approach and frequently trials the new ideas that she gathers from her discussions with other experienced childminders during regular network meetings. As yet, the childminder has not utilised a wider range of tools for self-evaluation and therefore, priorities for improvement are not as accurately targeted as they could be.

Children experience good levels of continuity in their care. This is because the childminder develops positive partnerships with parents and there are good systems in place for sharing information. For example, the childminder takes time to design informative newsletters, providing details of the activities that children have been involved in and suggesting resources that children can bring from home to support their learning. Children's developmental records are shared effectively with parents on a regular basis and the childminder is beginning to incorporate comments from parents into these records. For example, parents are encouraged to complete an 'All About Me' booklet with their child to provide clear information about their children's starting points when they first join the setting. The childminder works proactively in partnership with practitioners that support children in other EYFS settings, regularly exchanging information to ensure consistency in meeting children's changing needs.

The childminder has completed a wide range of training courses to ensure she has good knowledge and understanding to inform her role. Children are effectively safeguarded from harm and neglect, and their safety is well promoted. The childminder has attended a child protection training course, ensuring she clearly understands her role and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Regular risk assessments are carried out to cover all the areas accessed by the children and the childminder carefully considers children's safety before embarking on outings. These risk assessments are recorded clearly and reviewed regularly to fully address any further potential risks that arise.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are very well supported by the childminder to make good progress in their learning and development. They quickly become meaningfully engaged in the wide range of activities that are available in the childminder's home. They enjoy the homely play space in the lounge, where they are able to choose from a variety of toys and resources which meet their stages of development and interests. There are daily opportunities for children to exercise their physical skills in the fresh air as they use the ride on toys in the garden and master their climbing and balancing

skills during outings to the local park. They learn about features of the natural world as they observe the weather conditions each day and find the appropriate symbols to record this on the weather chart. The childminder fosters the children's exploratory play, providing treasure baskets containing interesting everyday objects and natural resources such as pine cones, wooden utensils and shells. Children are learning to identify their own names in print as they find their name card to self-register when they arrive. The childminder skilfully extends this learning by encouraging children to find the 'M' shaped playdough cutter and helping them to say the sound of the letter. Children's problem solving, reasoning and numeric understanding is extended as they are actively encouraged to think about numbers and counting in everyday activities. For example, the childminder encourages children to count the number of raisins they have in their bowls and encourages their use of positional language such as 'in front' and 'behind' when they are parking cars in the small world garage.

The childminder takes photographs of children's activities, keeps samples of their creative work and makes notes of her observations of children's development. This information is collated in a developmental record for each child, providing a map of their progress. In practice the childminder's observations are generally used effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning, however, these next steps are not always clearly recorded in each child's developmental record and are not sufficiently linked to the aspects of learning and development in the EYFS.

Children play very happily together and with positive encouragement from the childminder they learn to share and take turns. They are developing positive impressions of similarities and differences through spontaneous discussions, often inspired by a book of photographs that reflect a diverse range of cultures, gender roles and disabilities. However, the childminder is in the early stages of planning regular opportunities for children to share and celebrate a wider range of practices and special events. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as the childminder reminds them of the actions that keep them safe, such as sitting down when they eat and not running when indoors. Children enjoy sociable meal and snack times as they gather around the low-level table to eat a range of healthy snacks and meals. They are developing a good understanding of healthy living through daily routines and planned activities. For example, they look forward to harvesting the vegetables they have planted in the garden and confidently remind the childminder that they must wash their hands before they have their lunch.

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
---	-----

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