

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	220455
Inspection date	15/05/2009
Inspector	Carol 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 has been registered since 1996. She lives in Daventry with her husband and adult son. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder's husband is also a registered childminder. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home, together with two bedrooms on the first floor is used for childminding purposes. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Access to the front entrance of the childminder's home is via a low front door step.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time when working alone and a total of twelve children when working with her husband. Children attend for a variety of sessions and the childminder is currently caring for five children, four of whom are within the early years age range. She also cares for older children that attend before school and occasionally during the school holidays. The childminder has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those children who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She holds a recognised early years qualification and is part of an approved childminding network. The family has two cats.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children's safety is promoted extremely well and they are making good progress in their learning and development. Children's individuality is recognised and the childminder offers them a wide range of experiences that are thoughtfully planned and resourced to encourage all children to develop new and existing skills, gain knowledge and have fun. Consistency and coherence for children is considered because effective partnerships are in place with their parents and links are being fostered with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The childminder demonstrates a good capacity for improvement and is keen to enhance her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- expand strategies that encourage parents to review their children's progress regularly and actively contribute to their children's learning and development record
- embed systems for completing observations and finding out about the next steps children need to take so that activities can be more easily planned around what children need to do next and what they are interested in.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates, through her caring nature and professionalism, that each child is valued and special. Children are at ease in the setting and benefit from the good partnership that the childminder has established with their parents. They are provided with comprehensive information about her service and this includes a website, regular newsletters and selection of clearly written policies and procedures. Additional information is shared through everyday conversations, diaries, photographs and examples of children's work. The childminder has developed links with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and this enables her to meet the needs of children attending these settings and extend and support their learning when they are in her care. The childminder regularly communicates with parents about home routines and family practices so that they can adopt a common and consistent approach that effectively helps children to settle and progress.

The childminder is well-organised and all required documentation is in place. She works alongside her husband and information is regularly shared about individual children's routines and needs and everyday practices; this contributes to children's overall well-being and happiness. Children have ample room to play and rest and space is thoughtfully utilised to maximise children's learning and play opportunities. The childminder is very vigilant with regards to safety issues and comprehensive systems are in place to successfully assess and minimise risks within her home and on outings. The childminder is well aware of her role and responsibilities with regards to child protection and the welfare of children is always her first priority. She has attended specific training in respect of child protection and has obtained up-to-date information with regards to her Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

The childminder is enthusiastic about what she does and demonstrates a strong desire and commitment towards continual improvement. She is part of a recognised quality assured childminding network and regularly accesses training, for example, 'Food Hygiene', 'Makaton' and 'Marketing and Business Skills'. She has completed the Ofsted self-evaluation form and uses this and everyday reflective practice to help her identify her strengths and priorities for improvement. At her last inspection, the childminder was asked to develop her implementation of the 'Birth to Three matters' framework and this has been fully addressed. The childminder regularly meets with other professionals to discuss and share good practice and she makes excellent use of the internet to help enhance her knowledge of childcare related issues and improve her service.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's overall welfare is promoted well. The childminder successfully promotes a healthy lifestyle and through carefully planned activities and everyday conversation, children know about the importance of healthy eating and plenty of exercise. Parents provide food for meal times and the childminder offers children

healthy snacks and ensures drinks are readily available. Children bring their own toothbrushes and clean their teeth after meals and snacks. Handwashing routines are well-established and the use of paper towels and liquid soap help to prevent the spread of infection. Children enjoy easy access to the childminder's back garden and regularly visit local parks and soft play facilities. Consequently, they enjoy plenty of fresh air and exercise and their confidence and physical skills are increased.

The childminder informally plans and provides a variety of fun experiences that effectively motivate children and help them learn. All areas of learning are covered through a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, both indoors and outside. Everyday experiences are cleverly used to help children develop and practise skills and children are extremely well-safeguarded. The childminder is very vigilant with regards to safety and teaches children how to protect themselves and develop an awareness of potential risks. Road safety is reinforced during outings and everyday discussions, and carefully planned activities help to expand on this in a fun and child-friendly manner. For example, children recently took part in a 'Beep, Beep! Day' and practised crossing pretend roads safely. The local school offered the use of their playground for this activity, and parents and the community police were invited.

Children are making good progress and are effectively supported by the childminder who knows them well. She is aware of their individual needs and personalities and works in partnership with their parents and others involved in their care to enhance their learning. She observes them on a regular basis and records her findings in each child's 'Observational Journal' that she shares with their parents. These journals contain brief written observations and photographs of the children involved in play and help to build up a picture of individual children's interests, needs and progress. The childminder generally records her observations well and ensures that resources and activities are appropriate for those that attend. However, methods currently used for planning, observation and identifying individual children's next steps in their learning are not yet fully embedded. The childminder asks parents to review and comment on their children's journals, however, this is not on a regular basis. Also, strategies to invite them to contribute to these records are not fully developed. Consequently, her ability to create an accurate picture of children's progress is reduced.

Children are very happy and enjoy their time with the childminder. They are at ease in her company and she encourages them to be inquisitive and active learners through offering choices, engaging them in conversation and providing activities that encourage them to think and problem solve. Good quality resources are plentiful and a wide selection is stored accessibly at child height to encourage independence and freedom of choice. Resources reflecting diversity are fully integrated into the selection available and encourage children's awareness of the wider community and help them to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others. Children are well behaved and demonstrate good manners and care and consideration for others. The childminder provides children with a calm and positive role model and their good behaviour, achievement and effort is readily acknowledged. A clear behaviour management policy, shared with parents, helps to explain methods and ensure consistency for children.

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?	1

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?	1
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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