

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	140572
Inspection date	15/05/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 1995. She lives with her husband and three children aged 16, 14, and 13 years in a house in the village of Marsworth, Buckinghamshire. Childminding takes place mainly on the ground floor; children have access to the toilet and a room for sleeping on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to the local school to deliver and collect children and takes them to the local park. The family have two pet cats and some goldfish in a covered pond in the garden. The childminder holds a Level 3 childcare qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the provision is good. Children are happy and confident in this home from home environment where the childminder uses her substantial experience to effectively promote most aspects of children's care and education in a fully inclusive manner. Children make good progress in their learning and development, although observation and assessment systems are not yet sufficiently established to show the progress children make. The childminder builds positive relationships with parents and other professionals involved in the lives of children to underpin their welfare. She has begun to develop processes for identifying strengths and weaknesses in her provision to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the planning and assessment system to link more closely to the criteria in the Practice Guidance document. Demonstrate how the activities and observations are used to identify learning priorities for individual children and show the progress children make.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children experience a good quality of care and education in this 'home from home' family environment, supported by clear, specific, policies and procedures and all required written records. Documentation is available for parents and the partnership is strengthened by daily diaries and dialogue on delivery and collection of each child. All activities involve all the children at their individual developmental level. The childminder is actively seeking to improve her skills and knowledge through attendance at training courses and the completion of her home-based

childcare diploma qualification. The childminder devises flexible plans arranged under the six areas of learning. The childminder has begun to make insightful, though lengthy, narrative observations of children's learning and she links these to the six areas of learning through the use of coloured stickers. She ably adapts activities to accommodate differing ages and stages of development. However, planning and assessment systems are emergent and do not yet clearly demonstrate the progress which children make because they are not sufficiently linked to the 'Development matters' criteria in the Practice Guidance document.

Effective communication strategies demonstrate the value placed upon partnership working by the childminder who makes every effort to keep parents informed about details of their child's time with her. For example, she displays photographic evidence of the children's activities for parents information on her digital photograph frame. Children's individual needs are discussed in depth with parents at the pre-placement stage and re-visited regularly during daily conversations with parents and carers. Children's welfare is properly safeguarded because the childminder has attended appropriate training on child protection and has relevant reference materials to hand. The childminder is extremely vigilant and preventative action is always taken to address identified hazards and effectively minimise the risk to children. Comprehensive, written records of the risk assessments are in place. The childminder has begun to use the self-evaluation form as a means of monitoring her practice and recognises the value of this as a tool for securing continuous improvement in the future.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have lots of fun in this homely environment where age-appropriate toys and resources are educational and support learning. Children become active learners who explore from the security of a close relationship with the caring and responsive childminder. For example, they are happy to refer to her and readily respond to the warm smiles and cuddles which she offers. Children develop independence and the ability to make choices and decisions and the childminder readily responds to child-led play, sustaining a good quality of interaction with the children which develops positive attitudes to learning. For example, children comment upon the frogs, fish and tadpoles in the covered outdoor pond. The childminder provides a lovely explanation of why one fish is fatter than the others. Children are amused to find that a snail has found his way onto the trampoline in the rain and the childminder encourages them to show care and concern for living things, discussing with the children where best to put him for his own safety. Children form friendships with other children of all ages and engage in a wide range of play experiences. For example, they enjoy building sandcastles in the sand pit and playing with the toys on the living room floor.

Children clearly enjoy a wide range of activities which cover the six areas of learning. The childminder takes the children to the parks and to social groups where they can interact with other children and develop their skills in building relationships with a wide range of people. Children are eager to read, draw, write, count and talk. Children stay healthy and have daily fresh air and exercise because they regularly play in the local parks and walk in the local area. Feeding the ducks

beside the canal is a favourite pastime. Suitable documentation is maintained relating to accidents, medication and incidents and clear, robust, procedures are in place, protecting the children's health and well-being. The children learn about keeping safe in the home and beside the road. Children's behaviour is managed well because the childminder has consistent expectations and resolves disagreements fairly. She explains why some behaviour is not acceptable and always tries to end on a positive note, encouraging the children to make friends again if they have a 'falling out'. Effective strategies ensure their social, physical and economic well-being are very well 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.	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

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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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