

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	132185
Inspection date	25/08/2009
Inspector	Catherine Greenwood
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 1991. She lives in a quiet residential road in Tolworth, Surrey, with her husband and two children aged 15 and 20 years. The home is near to local bus routes and shops. Children have access to the lounge, dining area, kitchen, three of the bedrooms and the bathroom. There is a fully 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 three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years and is currently minding three children in this age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family have a hamster and a pet rat which are kept in the bedrooms.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The overall quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder has an exceptionally positive and caring approach towards the children, and communication and interaction in children's play are key strengths of the setting. Consequently, children make excellent progress in their learning. This is particularly evident in relation to their speech and language development. The childminder recognises the value of continuous improvement and attends additional training to enhance her knowledge. Parents are fully included and consulted about their children's care and learning through ongoing discussion and the use of questionnaires.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensure the front door is made fully secure when children are present

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has an extremely clear vision of how to improve outcomes for children. This is through the identification of development goals which are included in her self-evaluation of the provision. For example, she has clear intentions to complete work which is already in process, to create an improved outside learning environment, and provide a computer for them to develop their technology skills. The childminder has an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and makes regular use of the guidance to check that children are reaching their full potential.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are given details of all written policies and procedures, as well as regular written progress reports, which include comprehensive information about children's individual achievements. They are asked to share school newsletters, so that children's learning and interests can be complemented, for example, through the identification of projects such as 'dinosaurs'. The childminder fully understands her responsibility to safeguard children, and has an extremely secure knowledge of what to do if concerned about a child's welfare.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are very happy and settled and enjoy the childminder's involvement in their play. Resources such as shopping bags, pretend money and 'price labels' capture children's interest and their love of imaginative play. Children say they like playing with the 'shop, drawing, and painting'.

The childminder is highly observant and responsive to the choices that children make within their play. She joins them as they move freely between the main play area and garden and makes excellent use of spontaneous opportunities to ask questions that encourage children to express their thoughts and ideas. For example, when they find seashells in the garden, the childminder engages in conversation that leads to children saying they 'don't miss being on holiday because they can hear the sea'.

Children show great enthusiasm as they choose to use props and laminated pictures they find in bags for the identification of nursery rhymes and songs. They sing with confidence and enjoyment both individually and with the childminder. The childminder joins children on the sofa and listens to them singing, and finds pictures of other nursery rhymes, which encourages children to sing a variety of songs and extends their interest and concentration. Children show an excellent ability with using tools, for example when using the playdough, set up on a table in the garden. They can describe what they have made, name different colours and shapes within confidence, and enter into conversations about how colours change when they are mixed. The childminder praises children for what they know.

Children make excellent use of resources that the childminder sets up in the garden, and is in the process of further improving with a grant she has obtained from the local authority. This includes stepping stones for children to learn to balance, a water and sand tray, road traffic signs and bikes, a 'den frame' and a chalk board. A small table enables additional outside activities and picnics to take place, and a covered area over the decking provides plenty of shade. Children are consistently given the opportunity to choose resources they want to play with, which the childminder helps them to set up. The use of a folder which includes photographs of additional resources enables children to choose from a wide variety that are not immediately accessible, and make independent choices within their play. For example, when they choose to play 'post offices' the childminder makes paper, envelopes and colouring pencils available for children to 'write their own letters'. Good use of a web site provides additional resources such as pretend postage stamps.

Children enjoy playing together and are included in all activities such as making collage on pictures of fish, using different textured resources. The childminder sits with the children and makes good use of what they say to ask questions that extend their learning. Children notice and point to previous art and craft pictures they have created, which the childminder displays attractively on the walls in the main play area. This includes good use of labels which are linked to children's creative work, and which some older and more able children are beginning to read, such as words related to the topic of 'Summer'. The childminder encourages children's love of books, by reading stories in the school book corner, and helping them to read signs which they notice on outings. On shopping trips, children find and count items the childminder buys, and can count in numerical order. This is encouraged through daily singing activities. Children develop the ability to sing and play musical instruments as part of a large group at toddler group. Children make good use of a magnetic weather chart and change the labels when it starts raining.

Outings to farms, zoos, and regular visits to a local toddler group provide children with a good range of experiences. Weekly visits to the local park and use of climbing equipment at toddler group enable children to develop their physical skills. During the school holidays children enjoy trips to the cinema and restaurants. Children learn about the features of living things, for example, through keeping frog spawn which turns into tadpoles, and through talking about the life cycle of frogs. They also share information with others about animals that they have adopted with their family, such as monkeys that have been mistreated, and know the reasons why they have done so.

Clear boundaries within the childminder's home and on outings mean children are well behaved and cooperative. The childminder encourages children to share any incidents of behaviour that have happened at school if they feel upset. Children regularly engage in role play, as they pretend to play schools, doctors, and mummies and daddies. Accessible resources, such as dolls, playpeople and books, that reflect positive images, help children to learn about differences. Activities such as making lanterns and trying Chinese food, and discussions and explanations about things they see in school and the local community help children to learn about different cultural beliefs.

Activity planning takes all children's individual needs into consideration and is assessed regularly to allow a greater understanding of what the children require to help them develop well in all areas. Photographs show children have a good range of experiences, such as making cakes, mixing playdough, playing in the snow, doing puzzles, using the climbing frame at the park, and painting. Clear written progress reports are completed every six months and include each area of learning. Excellent use of observation and records related to the EYFS include photographs and the next step for children's learning. These records are shared with parents and given to them to take to their child's school when they leave the childminder's care.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. For example, they know not to put glue in their mouth, always to hold the pushchair on outings, and to listen to the childminder during fire evacuation practices. Children are secure within the premises due to a safety gate which is fitted to the doorway between the main

play area and the entrance area. However, the front door has a low level handle and is not locked at all times, which is a risk if children are using the toilet located on the first floor. Children are provided with a healthy and nutritious diet which includes lots of fresh fruit for snacks, and food they like. Consequently, they enjoy mealtimes and eat well.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
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?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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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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