

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	142057
Inspection date	21/04/2009
Inspector	Rachael Williams
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 first registered in 1990. She lives with her husband and four children in Axbridge, Somerset. The childminder employs an assistant. Minding takes place on the ground floor of the premises and the first floor may be used to accommodate sleeping children and overnight care. There is a fully enclosed rear garden with a separate area to accommodate family pets. The family care for three dogs and a cat. Children are frequently escorted to Oakfield Yard where children engage in Forest School activities. There are also regular visits to local attractions. The childminder escorts children from the local primary school and nursery.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. She is able to care for a maximum of six children under eight years old, when working on her own, and 12 children under eight years old when working with an assistant. At present, she has eight children on roll of which seven are in the early years age range. The childminder is also registered to provide overnight care for two children under eight years old.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a level 3 early years qualification and is currently committed to the advanced childminding programme. She receives support from the local authority and an early years teacher from a local primary school.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder is effective at making outcomes for children excellent. She has exceptional knowledge of the children and celebrates their individuality hence, children thoroughly enjoy their time with her. Children are actively engaged as they are provided with a wealth of experiences and learning opportunities to effectively stimulate and challenge their development. Partnership with parents and other early years providers is exemplary which ensures continuity in children's care, learning and development. The childminder has exceptional foresight and has accurately evaluated her provision taking positive and effective steps to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop planning and assessment systems.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by an experienced and well-qualified childminder. The childminder is excellent at monitoring her training needs and is proactive in

accessing relevant courses and guidance from other professionals. For example, at present she is seeking advice and support from an early years teacher in developing her planning systems in order to monitor the balance of experiences provided. The childminder shows exceptional organisational skills for instance, all regulatory documentation has been established and is stored securely and confidentially. Well-written and comprehensive policies and procedures underpin the excellent childminding service provided. These are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current legislation.

The childminder is excellent at evaluating and monitoring the provision for childcare. She has a very good sense of direction and is focused on making improvements that impact on children's care, learning and development. For instance, she effectively monitors the provision of toys and resources to ensure they meet children's interests and individual requirements. Excellent use is made of the local environment, especially the use of the childminder's yard, to provide children with the opportunity to investigate and explore nature. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection as consent has been obtained from parents to seek emergency treatment or advice and parents are provided with relevant information on the complaints procedure. Excellent relationships are established with parents and very positive comments have been received about the continuously good service provided. There is a regular exchange of information for instance, through daily diaries, which ensures parents are fully involved in their children's learning and welfare. On several occasions activities are further developed within the home for instance, after collecting eggs children are keen to cook cakes at home.

Children are provided with a safe and secure environment. Comprehensive risk assessments have been established for the premises, toys and resources, activities and each type of outing. Children are closely supervised and ratios are maintained at all times through the use of an accurate daily attendance record. Children become aware of their own safety through the clear explanations given by the childminder for instance, why it is not safe to jump off the settee or to kick the small balls within an enclosed space in case smaller children get in the way. Children are encouraged to think about their own safety when at the yard and are encouraged to be involved in establishing perimeters such as, setting out boundary flags. A tactile map is used to encourage children's exploration of the environment. Children's well-being is further safeguarded as the childminder has exceptional knowledge of child protection issues including the procedures to follow should such an incident occur.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are engaged in a wealth of experiences with a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities. For example, as part of an Easter topic children are encouraged to do sponge painting; having explored the feel of the paint on their hands one child redirects the activity and decides to do hand prints. Activities are well-planned as the childminder has exceptional knowledge of children's interests and enthusiasms. Relevant observations, documented in the daily diary and supported by annotated photographs, are successfully linked with

the child's stage of development and clearly identify next steps in their learning. The childminder shows exceptional knowledge of children's development and provides activities which challenge children effectively to develop new skills. For example, children are encouraged to mix cornflour and water together; they are encouraged to make decisions about their play choosing which colour to add so that they are able to explore the texture of the substance and to confidently mark-make. To ensure this new skill is mastered the childminder provides other medium and tools to stimulate learning for instance, soap flakes and a whisk as one child has an interest in anything circular.

The environment is exceptionally well organised to promote children's independence. An abundant range of toys and resources, including those to enhance children's understanding of diversity in our society, are easily accessible in low level whicker baskets. The childminder is in the process of labelling these baskets with photographs and words. The children are provided with a warm and welcoming environment where their achievements are appreciated and valued as they are displayed around the conservatory. Each child is acknowledged as an individual and treated with respect. Behaviour is exemplary. Children are very clear on boundaries and expectations through the consistent dialogue from the childminder. Each child is given individual attention and through this their communication skills are developing exceptionally well. The children are happy, confident and settled within the homely environment.

Through the childminder's stringent hygiene arrangements children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment. There are excellent procedures in place to ensure children are protected from pets for instance, there is a separate, double gated area to accommodate the dogs. Excellent hygiene arrangements ensure that hands are washed appropriately and children become aware of their own personal needs. Children are introduced to a healthy lifestyle where they are frequently outside in the fresh air and engaging in physical activities such as, Forest School activities which include caring for the chickens, collecting eggs, storytelling and building constructions. Children are involved in growing their own food in the vegetable patch which is prepared for the children so that they can eat them at their midday meals. Children also enjoy a healthy mid-morning snack of a selection of fruit. Drinks are readily available as children can access a jug of water independently to ensure they remain hydrated. Robust systems have been established to ensure that accidents and administered medication are routinely recorded and promptly shared with parents. The childminder uses the accident record exceptionally well to monitor her provision for instance, after reoccurring incidents involving a toy castle the childminder decided to remove this as observed to be a potential hazard.

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?	1

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?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
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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