

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	109023
Inspection date	07/05/2009
Inspector	Rosemary Davies
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 1989. She lives with her husband in the Toothill area of Swindon, Wiltshire, close to shops, parks, toddler groups and a library. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. The family keep a cat, rabbits and guinea pig as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding four children under five years. She also offers care to children aged over five years to nine years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Minded children may use the entire house, although in practice remain mostly downstairs. Entrance is through a narrow hallway and bathroom facilities are located upstairs. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outside play. The childminder holds a relevant early years qualification at Level 3. The childminder is actively involved in local childminding groups and assesses National Vocational Qualifications in childcare and education.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder develops excellent relationships with all children. She has a clear understanding of their individual needs and manages her provision to meet these effectively, overall. All children receive a very positive experience of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in which they make good progress. The childminder safeguards children exceptionally well and this is a significant strength of her provision. She reflects on her practice to identify areas for development and undertakes regular training, showing good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a system to help the youngest children be as independent as possible in choosing resources
- develop a better daily balance between indoor and outdoor play activities.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

This experienced childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to welcoming all children as individuals and safeguarding their welfare. She makes sure that all adults who stay in her home are cleared as being suitable to be with children. She maintains all required documentation to promote children's safety and good health, including children's details and records of their attendance.

Overall, the childminder uses her knowledge well to evaluate her practice effectively. She identifies her many strengths accurately and pinpoints areas for development, although she has not identified that some resources are not used as effectively as possible; currently, she does not use her garden as fully as she might to support children's learning outdoors. Nevertheless, the childminder shows a very secure understanding of the EYFS, monitoring its implementation well to make sure children receive a broad and balanced range of stimulating experiences.

The childminder establishes effective two-way communications with parents, keeping them well informed as to their children's progress in learning and development. Similarly, she makes effective links with others concerned with the children's care, such as outside professionals and children's key persons when they move on to other provisions.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children benefit from forming extremely warm relationships with the childminder and these provide a strong foundation for their learning and development. Children approach her happily for help or to join in their games. The childminder interacts well with the children. She supports their play through appropriate questioning, offering suggestions and by describing what they do, so widening their vocabularies; children hear early positional words such as 'first', 'middle' and 'underneath', for example. The childminder provides a good role model for children's language development, being careful to speak slowly and clearly, particularly when explaining new ideas. She makes her expectations clear; children respond well and behaviour is extremely good.

Children clearly enjoy the activities offered, which match their individual interests and stages of development closely; consequently, children concentrate well at their play. The childminder knows children extremely well and plans accordingly. She does this through establishing children's capabilities and individual needs when they first start and by continuing to observe their progress. She sets suitable aims for their learning and development, such as achieving toilet training, socialising at local toddler groups and learning to do things for themselves, for example, managing zips. The childminder tracks children's progress towards the early learning goals, monitoring experiences offered to make sure these cover all requirements of the six areas of learning.

Children experience a good balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities; however, whilst the childminder has a diverse range of suitable resources, there is no system to help the youngest children be as independent as possible in choosing these, which somewhat limits their choice. A good range of outings in the local community broadens their understanding of the world around them and how families differ, for example, to toddler groups, Roves Farm and community parks. Children grow plants from seeds, such as cress, which helps them learn about healthy eating but taken overall, there is an imbalance between daily indoor and outdoor play across some areas of learning, with too many activities taking place indoors.

Children's physical development is catered for very well as the childminder is keen to encourage children to 'have a go', particularly at more challenging physical play apparatus in local parks. Children learn how to keep themselves and others safe; for example, they climb steps carefully and wait at the top of a slide until it is clear to go down. Highly effective risk assessments and close supervision help keep children safe. The childminder thoroughly understands her responsibilities for protecting children's welfare. She is meticulous in her personal hygiene routines, again setting a good example to children. She prevents the spread of cross-infection exceptionally 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?	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?	1
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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