

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	250785
Inspection date	07/05/2009
Inspector	Sarah 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 was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband and two older children aged 20 and 22 years in the village of Parham, close to Woodbridge in Suffolk. The whole of the childminder's bungalow is used for childminding and a secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The premises is accessed via the front entrance which has a low step. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of six children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time, and of these, no more than three children may be in the early years age range. There are currently 18 children attending on a part-time basis, seven of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. Children live in the local area and surrounding villages, and some attend early years sessions at other EYFS settings. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years, both before and after school, and during school holidays.

The childminder escorts younger children to and from the local nursery and meets the older children from the school bus which stops nearby. She attends a music group and childminder group with the children on a weekly basis. The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for early education for three and four-year-olds. The childminder is quality assured by the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme and holds an appropriate early years qualification to NVQ Level 3.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children are provided with an excellent standard of care and make highly positive progress in all areas of their learning and development. The childminder strives to offer a fully inclusive setting where all children are skilfully supported to actively participate in activities which focus on their individual developmental needs and interests. Children are highly confident, settled and clearly delight in spending time with the childminder. The childminder embraces the process of self-evaluation and demonstrates commitment towards continuous improvement, helping to bring about sustained improvement to the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- incorporate the information gathered from other EYFS settings and outside professionals into the children's developmental records.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a very experienced childminder who has completed a variety of training courses to ensure she has maintained excellent levels of knowledge and understanding to support her role. A comprehensive range of written policies and procedures are in place to fully promote the successful running of the provision. Sessions run very smoothly and children benefit from a clear routine as the childminder organises the resources and activities extremely well to meet each child's interests and care needs. Children are kept exceptionally safe and secure at all times. This is because the childminder carries out robust daily risk assessments of all the areas they access and is stringent in her supervision of children when they play outside or take part in outings. Robust vetting procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for by suitable people and a secure record is kept of any visitors. Children are expertly protected from harm as the childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to her role in safeguarding children. She has attended appropriate training relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) local guidance and procedures, ensuring she can confidently follow up any concerns about a child's welfare.

Parents are provided with a superb range of written and verbal information, ensuring they are able to fully understand and compliment the childminder's procedures and expectations. They are invited into the setting for informal 'tea and chat' times, during which they discuss their children's development and share photographs of their activities. Parents are encouraged to take their children's learning journey records home to read and their comments are given high regard in these records. The childminder has established strong links with the other EYFS settings that children attend. For example, she strives to promote daily discussions with teachers at the local nursery to ensure the next steps in children's learning are being targeted consistently between the settings. The childminder is currently exploring ways of incorporating the information she gathers during these discussions into the children's developmental records to promote the partnerships even further.

The childminder has high aspirations for the quality and standards of the service she provides and conscientiously reflects upon her practice through rigorous self-evaluation. For example, she has completed the Ofsted self-evaluation form in great detail, identifying future training that will build on her observation and assessment skills. The childminder values the opportunity to share information with others, and participates in regular meetings with an established group of registered childminders to purposefully review her practice and gather new ideas. Annual questionnaires are issued to parents, ensuring their views and suggestions are fully considered. Parents speak extremely highly of the care their children receive at the setting and clearly feel that their children are making positive progress.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates extensive knowledge of the children's needs and meets them with enthusiasm and vigour. Children learn to be highly independent

as the childminder provides them with an environment which is child-led, rich in opportunities and exciting. All children quickly find activities and resources which capture their interest and offer appropriate challenge to extend their skills, particularly in the well-designed and resourced outdoor garden area. They enjoy taking safe risks as the childminder sensitively supports them to climb the steps for the first time, and takes the opportunity to extend their counting skills as they count down from five before they 'blast off' down the slide. Children are offered rich experiences which inspire them to learn about the natural world around them. For example, they talk about the mini-beasts they discover in the water tray and learn new vocabulary such as 'caterpillar' and 'centipede'. Children explore the ice they find in the boating lake whilst out and about in the local area, and are given time to test how solid it is and how it melts. The bright and airy indoor play space serves as a spacious area where children can push their dolls up and down in the pushchair and spread out in their small world play. They delight in playing with resources which reflect their current interests such as playing imaginatively with the popular spaceship, astronauts and shiny moon rocks. Children demonstrate a strong interest in books from a young age. They eagerly select their favourite stories and ask to share these with the childminder, who ensures they can all sit together to join in. Children delight in recreating the key elements of the story such as splashing in the water and trudging through the mud, as the childminder enthusiastically brings the book to life.

The childminder is very skilled in using observations and assessments to effectively track children's progress towards the early learning goals. Extensive learning journey records include meaningful photographic examples of the children participating in a wide range of learning opportunities, and detailed observations are skilfully linked to the EYFS areas of learning. The childminder has a strong commitment to meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and is currently attending training to become a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo). A wide range of resources that reflect of diversity such as small world characters, books and puzzles are successfully incorporated into the continuous provision, helping children to develop an awareness of different cultures, traditions and disabilities. In addition, children learn about different practices and events as they make dragons during Chinese New Year, visit a local Chinese restaurant to sample traditional Chinese food, and visit a local castle to join in with the celebrations for St. George's Day. Children have a very secure understanding of the importance of being kind to each other and often step up to help their friends. They are offered constant praise and encouragement by the childminder who understands that good self-esteem is the key to enabling children to become active and excited learners.

The childminder actively supports children to lead a healthy lifestyle, providing an extremely well-balanced range of highly nutritious meals and snacks and ensuring they have daily opportunities to be physically active in the fresh air. Children have rich practical opportunities to plant a wide range of fruit and vegetable plants in the garden, and begin to value these in their diets as they harvest these to enjoy in their meals. Children are actively involved in activities that encourage them to consider their own safety. For example, the childminder introduces road safety scenarios and realistic road signs that inspire children to think about road safety in their role play situations.

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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met