

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	251157
Inspection date	11/06/2009
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 1996. She lives with her husband and three children aged 20, 18 and 15 years in Ipswich, Suffolk. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding, with the exception of two bedrooms on the first floor, and a secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The premises is accessed via the front entrance which has a low step and there are toilet facilities on the ground floor.

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 17 children attending on a part-time basis. Six of these children are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) years. Children live in the local area and some also attend sessions at a nearby pre-school. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years, both before and after school, and during school holidays.

The childminder escorts children to and from the local primary school, nursery and pre-school and attends several social groups with the children on a regular basis. She is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently being assessed to the National Childminding Association (NCMA) 'Children Come First' Quality Assurance Scheme.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder has extensive experience and knowledge of how to best promote children's welfare, learning and development, ensuring they thrive and make excellent progress. Partnerships with parents and other early years providers are highly valued and contribute significantly to ensuring that each child's individual needs are expertly met. Children are extremely settled and confident as they engage in a wide range of stimulating play opportunities in a fully inclusive setting. There are robust systems in place to evaluate the early years provision, ensuring the childminder's existing high quality practice is continuously improved upon.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the positive impressions children have of their own cultures and faiths, and those of others, by sharing and celebrating a wider range of practices and special events.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is highly committed to ensuring that the provision is fully inclusive for all families. Parents are very warmly welcomed and receive an abundance of information about their children's care through the use of an informative parent pack, daily diaries, displays of photographs and meaningful daily discussions. Parents delight in reading through their children's learning journey records and the childminder is keen to incorporate their comments into these records. Comments from all parents, past and present, are highly positive and clearly show that they feel their children flourish in the childminder's care. The childminder also initiates regular discussions with practitioners who work with the children at other EYFS settings, sharing children's achievements and building on the themes and learning priorities that children experience at these settings.

The childminder is extremely experienced and pro-actively sources continuous training to enable her to provide extremely well for the children in her care. A wide ranging selection of written policies and procedures fully compliment the smooth running of the setting and ensure that children are kept extremely safe. For example, the childminder is dedicated to carrying out robust daily risk assessments to ensure children's safety is prioritised whilst they play in the home and garden, and during outings. The childminder has continued to update her knowledge of how to safeguard children by attending relevant training courses, and she ensures her safeguarding policy, includes a clear procedure for following up any concerns about children's welfare. Children are constantly supervised as they play and the childminder has ensured that all members of the household have completed the necessary checks to confirm their suitability to be in contact with the children.

The childminder has high aspirations for the quality of the service she provides and conscientiously reflects upon all areas of her practice. The benefits of completing the Ofsted self-evaluation form are genuinely recognised by the childminder, as she uses the process to establish clear targets for improvement and to reflect on the feedback she receives in parental questionnaires. The childminder values regular contact with other experienced childminders during training courses and network meetings, as this enables her to purposefully gather further good practice ideas to trial with the children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder promotes all areas of children's welfare, learning and development with great success and meets their individual needs with genuine enthusiasm. Children play in a highly vibrant, child-friendly and homely environment. The home affords them ample amounts of space to spread out whilst they explore the array of stimulating play resources, many of which they can access easily for themselves. Free flow access to the garden is very well promoted, where children can enjoy a wide range of activities covering all aspects of their development. For example, they relish the opportunity to find the animals in the sand and soil trays and make the most of exploring the snow. Children move with skilful control and co-ordination as they roll large hula-hoops across the lawn to each other, and they

enjoy moving their bodies in different ways as they jump on the large enclosed trampoline, fully supervised by the childminder. The natural environment is actively used to inspire children's knowledge and understanding of aspects such as the weather, plants and mini-beasts. For example, children delight in looking closely at a beetle and explore capacity as they make a tool to measure the amount of rainfall in the garden. Children's self-esteem and confidence is nurtured extremely well by the warm and caring childminder. With the childminder's sensitive encouragement, younger children discover the confidence to try new experiences, such as getting messy with the shaving foam. Children are developing strong skills in communication, language and literacy as they delight in sharing books and story props with the childminder. The childminder encourages younger children to describe what they can see in the pictures and offers them the challenge of saying new words such as 'ladybird' and 'penguin'.

Ongoing observations and meaningful photographs are collated in a learning journey record for each child. These beautifully prepared documents provide a meaningful insight into the children's time spent at the setting, the activities they have relished, their ongoing achievements and individual interests. The childminder skilfully uses the learning journeys to assess children's strengths and to establish the next steps in their individual learning and development. With the expert support of the childminder and carefully planned resources and activities, the children access a rich and varied curriculum that is responsive to their needs and interests, and motivates them to explore and extend their learning.

Clear boundaries for behaviour are calmly and consistently promoted by the childminder and weekly visits to toddler and childminder groups enable children to purposefully develop their social skills. As a result, all children are relaxed as they play co-operatively alongside each other and share and take turns with little need for support from the childminder. Although children are developing positive impressions of their similarities and differences through everyday discussions, the childminder has pro-actively identified the need to broaden opportunities for children to share and celebrate a wider range of practises and special events from the wider world. Children are skilfully supported to learn how to stay safe as the childminder makes the most of opportunities to teach them important safety rules. For example, they learn about road safety whilst walking in the local area and are reminded to tidy their shoes away to avoid the risk of someone tripping over them. Through the daily routine, colourful posters and discussions with the childminder, children become aware of the importance of good hygiene practises such as brushing their teeth after meals and regular handwashing.

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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