

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	256284
Inspection date	26/05/2009
Inspector	Susan Cox
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 1981. She lives with her husband in a residential area of Norwich. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding. Access is via a step and there are a few steps to the enclosed garden 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 seven children in this age group, some of whom are part-time. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Registration also includes working with another childminder on her premises at times. She is the coordinator of the local extended schools support group and has links with the other provisions the children attend.

The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification, is a member of the National Childminding Association and is very involved in the local childminding support group.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. All children receive exceptionally sensitive care as they are valued and respected as individuals. This is enhanced by the way the childminder works with parents, other providers and professionals to ensure children's particular needs are met. Children are making extremely good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Their safety is a priority as is their welfare. The childminder has a very clear understanding of her strengths and is highly committed to the continuous development of the service she provides.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning of adult-led activities.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children thrive due to the sensitive care they receive. An excellent understanding of child development enables the childminder to easily adapt the way she works to include children of various ages and abilities. Informative policies and procedures help parents understand the service she provides and secure relationships are established during the flexible settling in period. The childminder has taken

extensive training to work with children with specific medical conditions and agrees with parents clear procedures for the administration of medicines and what to do in emergency situations. Consequently, she knows the children well and has all the information required to meet their needs. She enables children learning English as an additional language to develop their communication skills by using a range of flash cards, books, posters and resources in their home language. Speaking clearly, using gestures and repeating key words also helps them learn English in a supportive and enjoyable way. Although not currently caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the childminder displays a very clear understanding of the sensitivity, flexibility and need for partnership working to ensure care provided is appropriate and all are included.

Parents comment on how useful they find the daily chat with the childminder and the use of the child's diary. This effectively helps them keep well informed and ensures information is exchanged even during busy times. Several have written most complimentary comments in support of the service they receive, such as, 'a fantastic childminder who I trust with every aspect of my child's care' and 'kind-hearted and trustworthy.' Children also talk happily about enjoying coming to play, meeting up with friends and that the childminder and her husband are really nice to them. He is also a childminder but does not have children registered to his care as he works out of the house. However, he has built a warm and relaxed relationship with the children so he very effectively works with his wife on some occasions and may cover for emergencies. Secure links are in place with other provisions the children attend so there is continuity in their care and learning and all aspects of their welfare are promoted.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implements this exceedingly well. She has a self-evaluation process which helps identify her strengths and areas she wishes to improve to further extend and develop the service for all. Risk assessments are conducted and action taken to minimise risks to children in her home, garden and when on outings. As a result, children are kept safe and secure whilst being able to play freely. An in-depth knowledge of child protection procedures enables the childminder to work effectively to support children and families. She understands her duty to protect children and knows the action to take if she has concerns so they are appropriately protected.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are motivated and active learners. This is because the childminder knows them well and understands their interests and personality. As a result, she ensures they have freedom to play in a rich environment where they make their own choices of resources and organise their play with confidence. A range of interesting adult-led activities are provided and the planning of these is identified as an area for improvement to raise the already high standard of provision. Sensitive observations are made and used to plan the next steps in children's learning which ensures they all make exceptional progress based on their starting points. Children thrive as they often choose to play in the fresh air regardless of the weather. There is a gazebo for them to play under to shelter from the worst of the weather

if they wish. They find wet weather clothing to wear in the rain and happily get soaking wet as they catch rainwater from the roof to add to the water tray then use containers to move the water to the tractor trailer to make a duck pond. Older children count the ducks, look at their numbers and think about how much more water they need to fill the trailer. A wealth of learning takes place from this type of activity with the childminder being on hand to extend opportunities, develop language skills and ensure safety. Children ride a range of wheeled toys, play in the tree house and take part in active games as they learn what their body can do. Playing in the park extends these skills and walks to and from school helps them enjoy routine exercise. When children are tired they sleep according to their individual routines and in a manner agreed with their parents.

Children enjoy a range of snacks and meals that promote healthy eating. They choose what they would like for snack and sometimes help prepare the fruit as they learn how to handle a suitable knife safely. An attractive range of meals are prepared using fresh produce and adapted to meet children's dietary needs. Children say how much they like the childminders cooking. They grow some vegetables to eat, make shopping lists and go to the shops and take part in cookery which extends their learning. Good routine practices support children as they learn how to manage their personal hygiene effectively.

Children chatter freely with friends and to the childminder who is adept at helping develop language skills through play. They read books and going to the library extends their use of books including for older ones to do research work. Children learn about the local area as they walk to a range of local activities and join in with people from the community as they take part in fun days. They explore the woods and wildlife, go to a farm to see the sheep and feed the ducks. Children's interest in flags is being used to help them find out about people who live in other countries, their lifestyle and culture so they value and respect differences. They take part in a comprehensive range of craft activities, make music, dance and act out a variety of real and imaginary experiences. Children's behaviour is generally very good. Sensitive support is given if children present challenging behaviour with the childminder giving reminders about what is expected to help them learn right from wrong and promote their self-esteem.

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?	2
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?	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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