

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	134530
Inspection date	30/07/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a Bicester, Oxfordshire. The main childminding activities take place on the ground floor of the childminder's home, where children have access to the living room, kitchen diner and conservatory. Toilet and washing facilities are also located on the ground floor. A first floor bedroom is used for children to sleep. There is a fully 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 two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family has a pet dog.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the provision is good. Children are very happy and confident in this 'home from home' environment, where the childminder uses her substantial experience to effectively promote most aspects of children's care and education in a fully inclusive manner. Children make good progress in their learning and development, although observation and assessment systems are not yet sufficiently linked to the Practice Guidance criteria to show progression. The childminder strives to build exceptionally positive relationships with parents and is proactive in developing partnerships with other providers to underpin children's welfare. She has begun to explore processes for identifying strengths and weaknesses in her provision to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop use of the Practice Guidance document to continue to plan appropriate play and learning experiences based on the children's interests and needs and to secure progression.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children experience a good quality of care and education in this 'home from home' family environment, supported by clear, specific, policies and procedures and all required written records. Partnership working is exceptionally strong and high priority is given to developing links with other providers to ensure continuity of care for children. For example, letters from the minded children and their childminder, invite key workers from other settings to visit the childminder's home. This helps to build a culture of trust and information sharing, which supports children's progress and achievement. Good quality documentation is available for

parents and the partnership is strengthened by information in the conservatory, regular dialogue and annotated pictorial records of daily activities.

Children's welfare is properly safeguarded because the childminder has attended appropriate training on child protection and has relevant reference materials to hand. The childminder is extremely vigilant and preventative action is always taken to address identified hazards and effectively minimise the risk to children. The childminder has begun to explore the self-evaluation form as a means of monitoring her practice and recognises the value of this as a tool for securing continuous improvement in the future. The childminder devises flexible plans arranged under the six areas of learning. She has begun to make brief observations of children's learning and uses these to identify the next steps in children's learning. However, records do not yet clearly demonstrate the progress which children make because they are not closely linked to the 'Development matters' criteria in the Practice Guidance document.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have lots of fun in this calm environment where age-appropriate toys and resources are educational and effectively support learning. Children become active learners who explore from the security of a close relationship with the caring and responsive childminder. For example, they are happy to refer to her and readily respond to the warm smiles and cuddles, which she offers. Children develop independence and the ability to make choices and decisions and the childminder readily responds to child-led play, sustaining a high quality of interaction with the children, which develops positive attitudes to learning. For example, children and their childminder sit and play a game based upon 'Noughts and Crosses', which provides context for discussion about strategic thinking and prediction within an atmosphere of laughter and jollity. The childminder encourages the children to think for themselves, asking what shape has three sides and praising the correct response. She points out that purple, pink and pentagon all start with the same sound of the alphabet.

Children clearly enjoy a wide range of activities, which cover the six areas of learning. Photographic evidence shows that the childminder takes the children to social groups where they can interact with other children and develop their skills in building relationships with a wide range of people. Children stay healthy and have daily fresh air and exercise because they regularly play in the local parks and walk in the local area. Photographs show children celebrating 'National Sandwich Week' by choosing their own fillings, visiting the library bus to choose books and grouping plastic animals into sets of wild animals, dinosaurs and farm animals. Suitable documentation is maintained relating to accidents, medication and incidents and clear, robust, procedures are in place, protecting the children's health and well-being. The children learn about keeping safe in the home and beside the road. Children's behaviour is managed well because the childminder has consistently high expectations and involves the children in discussion about ways to behave. Effective strategies ensure their social, physical and economic well-being are very well-met.

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?	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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
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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