

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101246
Inspection date	24/07/2009
Inspector	Angela Cole

Type of setting	Childminder
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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 1993. She is on the Early Years Register, and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to offer childcare during and after school and in school holidays. Overnight care is offered for two children. The childminder lives with her adult son in a semi-detached, four-bedroom house in a residential area of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The ground floor of the house is used as the main play area and the first floor and front room for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time and is currently minding six children in the early years age group on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for older children. The house is within easy walking distance of shops, parks, a soft play facility and drop-in groups, and the childminder takes and collects children to and from playgroup and local schools. Operational links are in place with other early years providers. The childminder has teaching experience and holds a Level 3 qualification in children's care, learning and development. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and of a local childminder support group.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder routinely meets the needs of all children through recognising their uniqueness to provide an inclusive, welcoming and caring service. Children make good progress in most aspects of their learning and development as they enjoy their time with her and are eager to be actively engaged in the choice of interesting play activities offered. The childminder works in close partnership with parents and other agencies and providers to ensure that children's learning and welfare needs are met. Most of the required documentation is meticulously kept and careful reflection ensures that plans for the future are well targeted to bring about further improvement to the provision and outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend children's access to outdoor play and their free use of craft and mark making resources to increase opportunities for their independent learning
- improve the record of risk assessment so that it includes a separate assessment for overnight care.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a strong focus on promoting children's welfare and supporting their learning and development. Clear, comprehensive operational planning underpins the childminder's work providing the detailed policies and procedures necessary for the safe and efficient running of the provision. The childminder has a good understanding of safeguarding so that children would be well protected in the event of any concern. Her home is well-equipped, safe and secure. A comprehensive and well documented risk assessment programme for care during the daytime is in place to ensure that safety checks are completed regularly and hazards minimised. Risk assessment has not been recorded for overnight care, should this be required, to promote children's safety. Close supervision at all times means that children are not put at risk. The use of available space and resources is planned to support learning effectively and children have regular access to the garden in groups with the childminder.

Varied systems for self-evaluation mean that the childminder reflects on her practice and is able to identify and address areas for improvement. Recommendations made at the last inspection regarding children's access to drinking water and use of the available spaces have been effectively met. Supportive training is identified and undertaken as, for example, the childminder has completed Level 3 qualification in childcare and education to further promote outcomes for children. Close observation of the children and in-depth discussion are well developed to take account of the views of parents, carers and children. The childminder forms good personal relationships with families and works closely with them to ensure that information is shared and children's individual needs are met. Established links with other providers promote inclusive practice, including sharing of information about the children's welfare and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning is well supported because the childminder uses good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage in her analysis of observations and planning. They benefit from her sensitive interaction as she gives them time to develop their play ideas, supports them to access the resources they need and asks challenging questions. For example, when using a book, children think about 'What is on the cake?' and are helped to recall 'What did we have on our birthday cake?' Children are encouraged to set challenges for themselves. For example, they count to high figures to find the total number of spots on playing cards and beads on the abacus. The learning environment successfully helps children progress towards the early learning goals as, over a period of time, the childminder supports them to access a wide range of age-appropriate resources. She provides a choice of indoor play items and sets out a wide range of outdoor equipment, including a variety of bubble blowing wands for children to manipulate and recognise different shapes. Children develop good listening and speaking skills in animated conversation as they are challenged by the childminder's use of words, such as 'a dejected bear'. They are fully involved in stories, enthusiastically lining letter sounds to those in their names and objects around them, and are keen to write their names on family

cards.

The planning cycle is effective as the childminder clearly identifies the children's individual starting points, aided by parents' input. She closely observes the children's play and effectively analyses her notes to plan for their next steps. This assessment is well supported by photographs and items of work to clearly show the good progress made in each area of learning. Many suggested activities encourage children to be creative and to think critically, including painting, role play and use of dough, though children do not have free access to a range of craft or mark-making materials to carry out their own ideas when they wish. A good balance of adult-initiated and child-led activities results in children being active learners. For example, the childminder suggests that the children feed the rabbit and after stroking the fur, they then feel the grass and bunny hop like rabbits. Good use is made of spontaneous opportunities, such as counting daisies found on the lawn, and children become absorbed in home activities, including baking and watering garden plants. Children develop their social skills as they are taken to a toddler service in church for stories and songs with musical instruments. They learn about the world around them as they greatly enjoy using the nearby facilities, such as a park for picnics, play on large equipment, visiting small animals and feeding the ducks.

Good quality care for children is seen in the childminder's high level of commitment to implementing effective strategies to promote all children's social, physical and economic well-being. Her secure knowledge of the welfare requirements supports children to gain a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Arrangements for supporting children to learn to keep themselves safe are carefully organised and well managed. For example, children willingly tidy the play spaces to remove any hazards. They learn about road safety, taking turns to operate the crossing lights, and recall practising leaving the house in case of an emergency. Behaviour is well managed as the childminder is firm and promotes positive attitudes so that children cooperate and willingly share the resources.

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?	2

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

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