

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY389361
Inspection date	14/07/2009
Inspector	Sarer Marcia Tarling
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 registered in 2007. She lives with her partner and their daughter, aged 19 months. Her partner's daughter, aged ten years, regularly stays at the home. All areas of the setting are suitable to be used but minding generally takes place on the ground floor. The through lounge and kitchen/diner are the main areas used and there is a ground floor bathroom. There is a secure enclosed garden for outside play. Family pets include a dog, three cats and three chickens.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for five children under eight years at any one time; of these, not more than two may be in the early years age group. The childminder currently has two children on roll, both of whom are in the early years age group. The childminder is registered to work with an assistant.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder is highly enthusiastic and committed to providing good outcomes for children by planning a variety of age appropriate and challenging learning opportunities both in and out of doors. Observation, planning and assessment systems are developing well and, as a result, the childminder monitors the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and encourages them to develop to their full potential. Effective partnerships with parents ensure the childminder has an excellent knowledge of all the children's individual welfare and learning needs and this helps to ensure the unique needs of each child are recognised and met. As a result, children are extremely secure and settled, play happily and are achieving extremely well. Capacity for continuous improvement is strong as the childminder reflects on her practice, identifies any areas for development and actively seeks out information and training to improve her service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the systems of observing, assessing children's progress and identifying the next steps in children's learning so they clearly show how they are linked to the areas of learning and show progress toward the early learning goals
- include all outings on the risk assessment
- continue to increase the range of resources and activities which help promote positive images of diversity

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- provide a fire blanket and ensure it is secured in the kitchen (Suitable premises, environment and

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equipment)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is proactive in seeking out methods to enhance her practice and explore how she can effectively deliver the EYFS by reading additional literature, such as the 'Practical EYFS Handbook', obtaining information from the National Childminding Association and by accessing training, such as a self-evaluation workshop through her local authority. Confidentiality is maintained at all times and the well organised documentation is routinely shared with parents. Regulatory documentation is well maintained and written policies and procedures underpin the good practice and provide a useful reference tool for parents, while the childminder uses them as part of her self-evaluation to review and ensure her practices are in line with the requirements of the EYFS and to identify areas for future improvement.

The childminder's increasing knowledge and understanding of the EYFS enable her to plan her weekly activities, ensuring all areas of learning are covered. Children are encouraged to be inquisitive and explore the good range of play resources, which are organised so they are easily accessible. The childminder has a clear understanding of her role and responsibility with regard to child protection and safeguarding children. A detailed risk assessment, along with daily checks, help to ensure the setting is secure and safe for children to explore. However, outings are not yet included on the document and, although the childminder has ensured smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are in place, she does not have a fire blanket. As a result, children may not be fully protected in the event of a fire.

During the settling-in period the childminder gathers information about children's interests and skills and this is then used as a starting point for planning activities to meet their individual needs. Observations of children's 'Wow!' moments are recorded, when they achieve something or develop a new skill, so they can be shared with parents. Parents are provided with useful information daily as to how their children's welfare needs have been met and they receive a scrapbook full of activities and photographs which clearly show how their child is progressing. As a result of these measures, effective partnerships are in place with parents and the childminder regularly seeks out their views in order to enhance her practice and make continuous improvement. Parents clearly appreciate the childminder as references say they are 'extremely happy as both children are making great progress.' They describe the childminder as 'a great communicator' and recognise the support given to their children with regard to language and communication skills. Effective partnerships have been established with the local pre-school, providing a valuable link between parents and school.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

All six areas of learning are covered across the continuous provision and weekly activity schedule, clearly showing how activities are linked to the areas of learning.

This is delivered flexibly, as the childminder responds appropriately to the changing needs and interests of the children by observing and responding appropriately to help them acquire new skills and make good progress. However the systems of observing, assessing and planning for children's next steps do not yet show how these are linked to the areas of learning and how they help children to progress toward the early learning goals. The arrangement of the good quality resources supports and encourages independent learning. The childminder joins in with activities both to provide guidance and enhance the children's enjoyment and to ensure that all children participate at their own level. For example, when children of different ages are completing a floor puzzle, the childminder encourages them to work collaboratively. As a result, children are focused and able to concentrate on what they are doing for long periods of time.

The childminder is committed to supporting children's competence in communicating, speaking and listening. Working in partnership with parents, she has learned some phonics songs and developed strategies for supporting children with communication difficulties. She is developing children's love of books by creating a reading area in the garden and regularly taking them to the library, allowing them to choose their own books. She reads and gets children involved in stories such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', using props so even the youngest children can join in. She skilfully extends the activity by encouraging the children to count along and by purchasing the different fruits and foods so the children can taste for themselves what the caterpillar has eaten. Children's curiosity and knowledge and understanding of the world are expanded further as the childminder provides fascinating activities, such as close observation of the life cycle of the Painted Lady Butterfly. Children spoke animatedly about how the caterpillar turned into a chrysalis and then emerged as a butterfly, discussing with the childminder the different countries it could migrate to. A flip chart of assorted information posters are referred to during activities, such as the United Kingdom and world maps, prehistoric animals, parts of the body, colours, shapes and numbers. Young children are able to recognise numerals, count along and even add two sets of numbers together. As a consequence, children are becoming competent in communicating, are developing rapidly and acquiring the skills necessary for their future learning and development.

Children play imaginatively in positive image role-play outfits, such as the fire officer, and like to hide and play in the tent. Children have supervised access to games and activities on the CeeBeebies website and enjoy playing with the interactive garage, vehicles and small people. Children are able to explore sound as they make their own musical instruments and delight in watching 'Grandad', the childminder's assistant, undertake do-it-yourself tasks such as building a chicken run for the newly acquired chickens. They chat happily about feeding the birds, searching for their eggs and cooking them for lunch. After using the childminder's binoculars to watch the birds at the end of the garden, children enjoyed making their own binoculars using recycled items. The childminder has identified that she needs to extend her range of activities and resources that help promote positive images of all types of diversity.

Children's health and well-being are extremely well promoted. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through the daily routines in the bathroom as they

return sniffing their clean, dry and fragrant smelling hands. Good hygiene practices are reinforced as the childminder says, 'Good boy, you remembered your hand' as a child sneezes. The childminder demonstrates a good knowledge of food safety and healthy eating. Mealtimes are a social occasion, with children clearly benefiting from the variety of nutritious dishes, such as salmon fish cakes, organic sausages and roast dinners. The selection of healthy snacks includes crumpets, breadsticks, cherries, strawberries and peaches, and fresh drinking water is routinely offered. Children always have a choice as to what they eat and meals are thoughtfully presented, for example, triangle sandwiches of different sizes and grapes served in halves for younger children. Children use all their senses to learn about world around them and have enjoyed planting and harvesting sweetcorn and runner beans in their own vegetable patch in the childminder's garden, making 'cauliflower sheep' using asparagus for legs and a small potato for a head, and baking pizza, biscuits and cakes. Children benefit from physical exercise as they use the 'Funky Footprints' activity mat and trike with trailer indoors, play at toddler groups and run around doing foot painting in the garden and using the swing and slide. Even in wet weather conditions, children routinely enjoy fresh air as they wear coats, wellies and enjoy splashing in puddles singing 'Pitter-patter raindrops!'

Children have a very good understanding about staying safe in a range of different situations, because the childminder explains rules for safe, sociable and desirable behaviour. Children are encouraged to assert their own rights in a non-aggressive way. Children respond well to the childminder's praise and swell with pride, for example, as she calls out 'Top Lad!' as a child helps to tidy up toys when finished with them. Children are helping to care for the play environment, putting recycling rubbish in the bin, making a positive contribution to the setting. The childminder's practical approach to risk assessment ensures any potential hazards are identified and steps are taken to remove or minimise them in order to prevent accidents. The childminder ensures children learn about road safety skills and the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency by practising regular evacuation drills. The childminder has an up-to-date paediatric first aid qualification, ensuring that prompt and appropriate first aid is given in the event of an accident or emergency.

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?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
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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