

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	106415
Inspection date	03/07/2009
Inspector	Valerie Anne Curotto
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 1997 and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She lives with her husband and two children aged 18 and 17 years in the Stapleton area of Bristol, close to the local hospital and University campus. Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the house which is built on four levels. Bedrooms on the second and third levels are used to rest minded children and there is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The childminder is registered to care for up to six children under-eight years. She is currently minding five children in the early years age group who attend on a part-time basis. The family have a dog which is kept separate and has no contact with minded children. The childminder is a member of the East Bristol Childminding Network and acts as a link childminder for less experienced childminders. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The overall quality of the provision is good. Children benefit from an attractive and stimulating environment where they are valued and their welfare is promoted. Assessment systems are developing well and each child makes progress as varied and well-supported activities impact on their learning and fosters their independence and self-esteem. The childminder makes good use of available support through links with other childminders and ongoing training to evaluate and develop her provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop assessment arrangements to ensure a balance of observations across all six areas of learning and further support links to planning for individual children

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected as daily risk assessments are routinely carried out, recorded and ensure suitable measures are in place. For example, safety gates prevent children from having access to potentially hazardous areas and there is appropriate management of the family's dog. Regular fire drills ensure children are familiar with evacuation procedures and visits by fire fighting crews, while fun, they reinforce important safety messages. A suitable safeguarding procedure is in place and the childminder is proactive in ensuring she updates her training on the local authority's procedures.

The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to developing her provision

and uses skills learned on training courses to impact positively on children's experience in the setting. For example, she has created treasure baskets for young children to explore and increased the range of multicultural resources to promote children's understanding of diversity. She makes good use of local support networks to provide children with varied activities at local facilities including soft play areas and the nearby children's centre. Together with other childminders, she shares ideas

which provide a general framework for their planning. Using seasonal themes and linked activities, this then acts as a platform from which they support individual children's needs. Her experience also benefits others as she provides support as part of the link childminder's scheme.

Resources are well-organised in labelled crates and rotated to support children's activities. As a result, additional items stored off the main play area are readily accessed to extend children's play and maintain their interest. Children's observations indicate a good understanding of child development by the childminder and this is evident in her support of children's activities. Children's assessment records are readily available to parents and effectively track their progress from their starting points at the setting. Observations are generally well-balanced and the next steps in children's learning identified. However, some areas, such as communication, language and literacy and links to future planning are not as consistently maintained to further promote children's learning.

Record keeping, such as individual health and dietary needs, contracts and registers, is kept up-to date and well-organised to promote individual children's welfare. A comprehensive range of policies provide useful information and reassurance for parents about their children's care. The childminder continues to develop ways of sharing information with parents, such as newsletters and displays, to involve them with their children's learning. Parents comment positively on the care their children receive and the progress they make in the setting.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The main play area is spacious and contains a wide variety of resources which effectively engage children's attention. As a result, children are secure and well-occupied in the calm, child-centred surroundings. Activities are child-led but thoughtfully extended as the childminder spontaneously puts out additional resources to meet their needs. For example, she provides writing materials for a shopping list as she supports their role play with questions about how they will get to the shops and what they are having for tea. Children's discoveries are acknowledged by the childminder as they observe 'I've got different colours in my rainbow' and recognise numbers on the till. Their understanding of shape and size is reinforced in everyday situations and planned activities. For example, they spontaneously compare the size of pencils they use, match different sized screw tops to plastic bottles and watch their sunflowers grow.

Children behave well and the childminder calmly reinforces expectations to ensure children play cooperatively and show consideration for others. They play in a warm

and caring atmosphere where each child is acknowledged and their individual needs understood. This is supported by settling in procedures which ensure information is exchanged with parents effectively. Children's independence is fostered as they each choose their own fruit for snack and help organise activities. Children develop useful social skills as they acknowledge the achievements of others who concentrate using a magnetic rod to catch fish. Children enjoy stories and join in familiar phrases. They discuss their holiday plans with each other and recall previous activities, such as playing in the snow. Younger children have space to explore their surroundings while the childminder ensures their safety, remaining alert to potential risks as they investigate resources.

Children benefit from regular additional facilities in the local community which promote their learning and development. Local groups provide additional creative opportunities and themed activities which develop their understanding of diversity. Soft play and use of large outdoor equipment extends their physical development and self confidence. They enjoy discovering the world around them as they take a boat trip round the city docks and meet animals at the city farms. Children are reminded of risks in their own environment and how their behaviour affects the safety of others. For example, they readily help clear up toys when trip hazards are pointed out and sit sensibly at snack time.

Children's health is protected as they play under the shade of a garden canopy and are reminded to put on their sun cream and hats. They recognise when they are thirsty and use their individual drink bottles which are replenished and readily accessible. Children learn where their food comes from as they children enjoy growing fruit and vegetables from seed to enjoy with their meals. They make fruit kebabs and do regular cooking activities which promotes their understanding of healthy eating.

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