

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	123385
Inspection date	01/12/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott
Type of setting	Childminder

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404040, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1993. She lives with her husband and three children aged 18, 16 and 12 years in a house in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The childminder uses the ground floor of the property for the main childminding activities and an upstairs bedroom for children requiring undisturbed 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 the early years age group. 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.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in this family home environment where the childminder uses her substantial experience to effectively promote most aspects of children's care and education in a suitably inclusive manner. Every child is valued as a unique individual and children make good progress in their learning and development. Insightful observation and assessment systems are in place but are not yet sufficiently linked to the Practice Guidance. The childminder builds very positive relationships with parents and other professionals involved in the lives of children to underpin their welfare. She uses self-evaluation as a process for identifying strengths and weaknesses in her provision to actively 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 secure children's progress and link the next steps in learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children experience a good quality of care and education in this family home, supported by clear policies and procedures and all required written records. Children's welfare is robustly safeguarded by the childminder who obtains appropriate checks for all adults living in the household and has a confident knowledge of local safeguarding procedures. Good quality risk assessments are in place and effective action is taken to manage or eliminate risks for children. Planning of daily routines is appropriately flexible and responsive to the needs of children. The childminder demonstrates a competent working knowledge and understanding of child development and has set up an observation and system

assessment in line with requirements. The childminder makes notes of each child's milestones and achievements and illustrates these with photographs and examples of work. However, observations and assessments are not yet sufficiently matched to the Practice Guidance to fully secure children's progress and to help them to progress onto the next stage of their learning.

The childminder makes effective and efficient use of a broad range of high quality resources, using the generous space in her home to provide a wide range of activities for the children. Equipment is easily accessible in low level drawers, shelving and boxes, enabling children to make decisions and choices in their play. The childminder rotates the resources regularly to prevent children becoming bored with the toys, storing the surplus in upstairs bedrooms. Extremely effective verbal communication strategies demonstrate the value placed upon partnership working by the childminder who makes every effort to keep parents fully apprised of all matters relating to their child's care and welfare. Children's individual needs are discussed in depth with parents at the pre-placement stage and re-visited regularly during daily conversations with parents and carers. The childminder has begun to use the self-evaluation form to monitor her practice, identify any weaknesses and sustain continuous improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

This childminder tries to look at her practice from a child's perspective and makes the environment as welcoming and interesting as possible so children feel relaxed and want to join in. She provides a wide range of toys so that children can make choices, remembering that children are unique individuals at differing stages of development. The childminder provides lots of shared activities which help the children feel confident and valued. For example, the shared reading of stories stimulates language development and helps to introduce new words. The childminder reads with great expression to make the characters come alive as she finds that children can understand the story better. Consequently children enjoy reading and visiting the library. The childminder encourages children to play a lot of games to develop their social behaviour and concentration skills. They learn how to take turns, learn about rules, and winning and losing. Children make marks with paints and crayons, and develop manipulative skills through gluing, play dough and cooking activities. Construction toys help to develop an understanding of mathematics and outings enable children to learn about their world. Lots of physical activities outdoors help children to keep healthy and the children thoroughly enjoy singing and music. They have musical instruments to play with and can use the computer and other electronic games.

The childminder skilfully draws the learning from child-led play, sustaining a high quality of interaction with the children which makes them think for themselves and develops positive attitudes to learning. For example, the childminder supports the children as they complete jigsaw puzzles. She asks them open questions to stimulate their reasoning, reminding them to try turning the piece round to see if it fits better. The childminder takes the opportunity to extend numeracy skills when the children count the number of puzzle pieces to five, by asking what number

comes after five.

Children form friendships with other children and learn to adapt their behaviour to different events, social situations and changes in routine. The childminder ensures that children have plentiful opportunities to paint, draw and enjoy messy play. The childminder actively promotes inclusion and uses books, toys, puzzles and festivals to celebrate differences. Consequently, children experience a meaningful range of activities and resources, which promote a positive view of the world and increase their understanding of other cultures and disabilities. The childminder knows the children's relative abilities well and sensitively ensures that all activities are appropriately adapted and managed at their individual developmental level. For example, she provides a bowl of icing for younger children to spoon onto biscuits whilst older children enjoy the challenge of using icing tubes.

Children stay healthy and have daily fresh air and exercise because they play in the well-equipped garden on a daily basis and usually walk to and from the local school and park. 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 inside and outside of the home because the childminder provides age-appropriate explanations as to why they must find a safe place to cross the road when collecting the older children from school. Children's behaviour is managed well and 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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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
--	-----