

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY390423

Inspection date

03/11/2009

Inspector

Jane Mount

Type of setting

Childcare on domestic premises

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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.

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 setting

The Funny Farm has been established as a childminder group since 1992 with individual childminders and assistants working alongside each other from the premises. As the setting employs seven staff the provision was newly registered in May 2009 to provide childcare on domestic premises.

The property is owned by the registered provider and her husband who both live and work from the premises which is a four bedroom detached house. All areas of the property are included in the registration and include a playroom, a conservatory, a dining/art room and a downstairs bathroom. The family living room is available for occasional use. Facilities for the babies and younger children requiring a sleep during the day are available on the first floor. The outside play area consists of a secure garden and running adjacent to the house is a large field which is available for use by the setting. Also living at the premises are two dogs, a budgie, fish, ducks and chickens. The property is situated close to Bedmond, near Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire and is in a rural location. The provision serves the local area and the wider community and provides a flexible service. It is open each weekday from 7:30am to 6.00pm throughout the year, closing only for public holidays and one week at Christmas.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 16 children under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 30 children on roll all of whom are in the early years age range. The setting provides funded early years education. It is able to support children with special educational needs and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Overnight care is not included in the registration.

The provision employs seven members of staff, five of whom are also registered childminders and includes the registered provider and the manager. The provider has extensive childcare experience and the designated manager is working towards a level four childcare qualification. Two other registered childminders have level two childcare qualifications and the deputy is to undertake training to complete an early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. Partnerships with parents and carers ensures children's individual needs are met and an inclusive and welcoming environment is provided to all. A committed staff team implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected. Staff support children well and generally effective planning and assessment systems ensure children are making progress in their learning and development. The provision has a positive attitude to improvement and is aware of their key strengths and some of the areas needing further development such as additional

training for the deputy. Systems to effectively monitor the quality of the service offered and to ensure continued improvement are not yet fully developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager (Suitable people).
- 17/11/2009

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

- develop further planning and assessment systems to ensure they effectively cover all areas of learning and development and learning intentions for individual children are clear
- develop further a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is protected because procedures are in place to safeguard children. For example, an informative safeguarding policy is available along with child protection publications which all staff are aware of. Also, there is a designated member of staff responsible for child protection who would ensure the correct procedures are followed if staff did have a concern. Children's safety and well-being are promoted because recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff ensure children's safety and well-being are protected. For example, written risk assessments and on-going visual checks ensure the environment is safe and any potential hazards are identified and minimised. Children are closely supervised to ensure they remain safe from harm and the security of the premises ensures no unauthorised person can gain access and that children cannot leave unsupervised.

This is the setting's first inspection since registering as daycare on domestic premises and the staff team have been working hard to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the EYFS framework. They work well together as a team and are guided by the provider and designated manager who both have a clear vision for the setting. The setting is generally aware of its key strengths and understands there are areas requiring further development. Some processes are in place to monitor and assess the quality of the provision. For example, parental feedback is sought and policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis. A more effective system such as self-evaluation to closely monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement has not been implemented yet. Some systems are in place to monitor and support the staff such as staff

induction and staff appraisals. Also, informal staff meetings take place on a regular basis and includes daily discussions and updates to ensure information is shared between all staff. Communication between staff is effective. Continuous professional development is promoted with staff able to update their knowledge through attending appropriate short courses and workshops and they then share the information with the rest of the staff team. Currently the manager is undertaking a level four childcare qualification. However, the deputy is yet to undertake appropriate training to ensure she is suitable to take charge in the absence of the manager.

All required documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place and records, policies and procedures are generally informative and overall well-organised. Good use of space, resources and effective staff deployment ensures an environment that is safe and fully inclusive. All children and families are valued and appreciated. Children's individual needs are met because staff have developed positive relationships with parents, carers and others which ensures information is effectively exchanged. A key person system is in the early stages of development and daily communications with parents and carers ensures children's individual needs are met and children receive continuity in their care. An effective settling-in policy is implemented which caters for children's individual needs and as a result children are happy and confident in their play and develop a strong sense of belonging as they feel included and welcomed into the setting. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and achievements with children's assessment records shared with parents. The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and works with parents and others to support and meet children's individual needs. For example, the setting has links with some other early years settings and other agencies and professionals to ensure continuity and to promote the full integration of care and learning.

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

The manager has worked hard to ensure observation, assessment and planning systems are in line with the EYFS framework and staff are developing confidence in using the new systems. Overall this is working well and children are making progress in their learning. Observation and assessment systems generally show how children are progressing and this information is informally used when planning future play experiences for children. Planning is generally informative although does not always have clear learning intentions or identify individual children's learning needs. Staff are beginning to use the EYFS to plan activities and play opportunities and this is generally led by children's interests. Staff effectively support children in their play with adult-led and child-initiated activities generally well balanced to encourage children to be active learners. Overall the environment is organised to encourage and promote children's independence skills. For example, some resources are organised so they are easily accessible for children which encourages them to make choices.

Children have regular opportunities to express themselves creatively and to explore varied materials and media on a daily basis, such as painting, sand, water and play

dough. For example, children enjoy using spray bottles filled with paint to make firework pictures. Children have opportunities to experience music and their physical skills are promoted with opportunities to exercise planned into the daily routine. Children use their imaginations such as when they dress-up as doctors and care for their 'patients' in the hospital area. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are supported with regular opportunities for singing and reading stories. Children are beginning to develop confidence and an understanding of problem solving reasoning and numeracy. For example, they count the plates and cups at meal times and enjoy counting when singing songs. Children have access to some resources that develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and technology. Staff promote a positive awareness of diversity through some activities. For example, children recently learnt about Divali and enjoyed making clay pots and cards. Children participate in activities that develop their understanding of the environment. For example, they enjoy feeding and observing the wildlife in the garden. During the summer they learnt about ladybirds.

Staff are proactive in implementing some effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health and well-being. For example, good hygiene procedures are followed when changing nappies and consequently the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Children are beginning to learn how to stay healthy and about personal care routines. For example, they clean their hands before eating or after going to the toilet and often discuss the reasons for doing so. Children are provided with a varied and balanced diet and have opportunities to learn about healthy eating. For example, they sometimes collect the chicken eggs from the garden and discuss the benefits of eating fresh eggs. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and are confident and self-assured in the setting. They are learning how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, children are taught the correct way to hold scissors or when in the garden on the climbing frame are taught how to hold on tight in case they fall. Children participate in regular fire drills and therefore learn how to stay safe in an emergency. Children behave well and consistent praise and encouragement from staff ensure children develop high levels of self-esteem. Staff reinforce sharing and respecting each other's feelings. Children are respected and valued as individuals and in turn are beginning to learn to respect each other's differences and to manage their own behaviour.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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