

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	113178
Inspection date	14/01/2010
Inspector	Anne Gunston
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 registered in 1994 and lives with her husband and 13-year-old daughter in a house in a residential area of Denmead, Hampshire. The home is within walking distance of local shops, parks, schools, pre-schools and public transport links. Children have access to the ground floor of the home for play and there is a secure garden available for outdoor play. The family have two dogs as pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a total of six children, of whom three may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for five children in the early years age group and nine children in the later years age range; all children require care on a part-time basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled in the childminder's care. They make good progress in their learning and development because she recognises the importance of working in partnership with everyone involved in a child's life. She takes time to familiarise herself with children's routine and works co-operatively with their parents. The childminder provides an inclusive environment where every child is welcome. She has a positive attitude towards continually improving her service and has begun to monitor the success of activities and experiences she provides for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop ways to ensure parents have regular access to their child's developmental records to encourage them to make contributions and have increased involvement in their child's learning
- develop the methods of monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the provision so that the targets set link closely to the outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded by the childminder's attention to detail when completing her risk assessments. These documents are thorough and identify when equipment in the home needs replacement or hazards that children encounter on outings need attention. The childminder makes good use of her records to support her in keeping a safe environment. For example, she monitors the temperature of her

refrigerator and completes a monthly test of fire alarms. The childminder has secure understanding of child protection procedures and recognises that records she keeps, of accidents or injuries to children, are essential should a referral need to be made to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The childminder has good knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and takes steps to protect children at all times. She makes sure that children receive personal supervision and plenty of her attention by use of attendance register. This document is a quick, visual tool, which enables the childminder to support parents and offer places to children at short notice, yet ensure that she always maintains ratios.

The childminder is very experienced and well established in the community. She attended a great deal of training following initial registration, is open to constructive criticism and aims for continual improvement. She took prompt action on recommendations made at her last inspection by introducing a complaints policy and paperwork for parents to use. Children now take part in regular fire drills and evacuate the home to prepare them for such emergencies. The childminder takes account of children's emotions at this time; children were concerned that the family dogs would be forgotten. The childminder changed the routine to reassure the children but made sure that they can still get well away from premises and access a safe place. The childminder has a positive attitude to change and is particularly pleased that, since the implementation of the EYFS, she has a higher level of communication with other providers who deliver this curriculum to children in her care. With parents' consent, she shares her knowledge of children's development with these professionals to ensure a continuous approach. She also recognises her own skills and takes steps to fill any gaps in her knowledge. For example, she makes use of publications such as *Who Minds* to keep up to date with childcare issues. She attended training workshops on how to complete self-evaluation of her practice. The childminder has begun this process and demonstrates knowledge of how to change or adapt activities so children can achieve success. However, the evaluation method is not fully effective, as the childminder is not using it to reflect on how her actions improve all of the outcomes for children.

Children have plenty of space for play and are comfortable in the childminder's home; they particularly enjoy using the low lounge window to watch what is happening in the community, such as the weekly visit of the dustmen. Children use a good range of resources for play; these promote all areas of development. The childminder stores them at child height; she rotates the boxes of toys at intervals to maintain children's interest and ensure they are constantly stimulated. She ensures that children have daily access to the garden via her dining room, which houses the family dogs for part of the day. The childminder allows children well supervised contact with her pets at times, but is very aware that any animal is potentially a risk to children. She secures her family dogs in their own fenced area when children are playing in the garden.

The childminder welcomes parents' views and asks them what they think of her, maintaining open dialogue by daily discussion. She uses a daily diary for each child and displays the day's routine so parents are fully informed. In this way, parents know the activities their child takes part in and are aware of practical issues, such

as how long children sleep or when nappies are changed. The childminder keeps an individual learning journey record of each child's progress, including photographs and states that parents are welcome to see this at any time. However, she does not initiate discussion of this record with parents to share information on each of the areas of learning and encourage a more collaborative approach to the child's development. Parents are told they can telephone at any time or look in the window to check that their child is always happy. The childminder works in an open manner and gives parents the opportunity to read and discuss her policies at their initial meetings.

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

Children are independent learners while in the childminder's care as she allows them a great deal of freedom to choose activities. They make decisions to do puzzles and search for the pieces, supported by the childminder who encourages them to persist in finding lost ones. Her involvement with children in their play keeps them involved and interested, yet she stands back to allow children time to concentrate on their chosen task. For example, children line up bricks and pay attention to getting them straight and neat. Children love to look out of the window with the childminder who prompts them to notice that the snow is melting. In her discussions with children, the childminder is keen to encourage their ability to communicate. She keeps up constant dialogue to describe what they are doing and values their early attempts at language, sensitively repeating what they say to encourage good pronunciation. Children feel part of their community from the security of the childminder's home, as they collect the post or watch squirrels running from gardens nearby. They regularly attend toddler groups to develop their creativity and imagination, whilst learning to work alongside children of similar age. They learn about other cultures in discussion with the childminder and when using her resources such as the Chinese dragons. Books and role-play materials reflecting the wider world are available to children for use in their play, raising their awareness of diversity.

Children clearly feel secure and comfortable with the childminder, who is quick to recognise any signs that a child is upset, because of tiredness or unfamiliar surroundings. For example, children new to her setting are comforted by having their favourite toys around when nappies are changed. Children go to the childminder for help with tasks or to settle on her lap for a cuddle. The childminder is preparing the children to be self-sufficient in many ways. She expects them to help her in the daily routine, such as finding their mat for snack time or feeding a 'reward' snack to one of the family dogs. Children gain confidence during these times as they learn to hold the biscuit correctly so they come to no harm. Children are gaining real understanding of how to show respect for their surroundings and play in a safe manner. The childminder warns them of hazards, such as standing on chairs; she reinforces this message by allowing children to do so then slip into her waiting arms. Children generally are behaving very well for the childminder; they play well together and often have calm reflective moments when they are content just to be in one another's company. The childminder is a good role model and expects children to help her and each other; they do so without question and

contribute to the daily routine. The childminder manages any unwanted behaviour calmly, by giving children explanations, for example, puzzle pieces should not be thrown because they will be damaged and not fit. Children are learning that 'Susie's rules' are relevant and imposed for good reason.

Children enjoy plenty of opportunities for daily exercise and fresh air. They walk if needing to go to school or pre-school and use a range of climbing equipment and wheeled toys at the local park and toddler groups. Whenever they are out of the home, the childminder supervises them well but gives them the skills to help themselves keep safe. She involves the children in singing Spit Spot so they stick together and do not linger if crossing roads. Young children have to walk by her side or reins are used. The childminder promotes children's good health by ensuring they have frequent drinks and keep well hydrated. She clearly knows children's dietary preferences and works with parents to try to encourage them to eat healthily. The childminder is prepared to serve snacks and meals sent in by parents or cook a main meal at the end of the day. Children are involved in planning these and select their favourites each week, such as roast dinners. At all times hygiene standards within the home are high. The childminder uses gloves for nappy changing and individual wipes to clean hands before meals or if children have touched the dogs. She is especially watchful that children do not use each other's cups so no cross-contamination occurs.

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	3
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
--	-----