

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	134282
Inspection date	13/04/2010
Inspector	Jill Milton

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 0300 123 1231, 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: 0300 123 1231
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 first registered in 1987. She lives with her husband and two adult daughters in the market town of Thame in Oxfordshire. The home is within easy travelling distance of schools, nurseries and local amenities. Childminding takes place on the ground floor of the home and there is a secure garden for outdoor play. The family have two cats. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for up to six children under eight years at any one time, three of whom may be in the early years age range. She currently cares for four children in the early years age range and four older children.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a stimulating range of weekly activities to help children progress well with their learning and development. The childminder demonstrates a conscientious approach to her professional development, adding to her knowledge and skills over her many years of childminding experience. She keeps a wide range of helpful information to share with parents and carers and is excellent at establishing and maintaining good working relationships with the families she works with. The children play in a homely atmosphere and the childminder has a good understanding of how to promote their individual welfare.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the way resources are stored and presented to make them more easily accessible to all age groups
- further develop a manageable system of monitoring the children's development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder maintains a comprehensive set of documents relating to child protection to enable her to act speedily if she has concerns for a child. She has an excellent understanding of her responsibilities to keep children safe and she attends training in the areas of safeguarding and risk assessment. The childminder maintains sensible precautions in the home to allow children to play safely and she keeps a written record of risk assessments. The childminder has received a long service award for her commitment as a volunteer in the footsteps road safety programme. This is one example of the childminder's commitment to improvement and forms part of her consistent approach to widening her professional skills and knowledge. She is making a good attempt at using self-evaluation to reflect on her

work and plan future training opportunities. Her links with local childminders help her to share good practice and learn from others.

The childminder forms successful partnerships with parents and carers. She is also proactive in working with other professionals so that children receive consistency in their daily routines, for example when adopting strategies to manage challenging behaviour. Parents write messages in letters and emails that praise the childminder for her work with the children and families use her services over many years. The childminder uses an excellent range of ways to communicate with parents, for example through informative notes in a daily book or via the many displays in the home.

The childminder provides a homely environment for the children to play and rest and there is careful maintenance of high hygiene standards. She has built up a wide range of resources to cater for different ages and abilities. However, the toys are not displayed attractively and the large piles of books or games make it more difficult for younger children to access items for themselves. The childminder is well organised at preparing documentation to support her work and she keeps neatly arranged files of written policies and guidance on the Early Years Foundation Stage. She thinks through her approach to all aspects of her work so that she is in a good position to explain issues to parents. The childminder has experience of caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and her policy on equal opportunities reflects well on her positive attitude to inclusion.

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

Children enjoy their time at the childminder's house and they all take part in a stimulating range of activities that the childminder plans for them. The children are progressing particularly well in learning about how to keep healthy. They benefit from plenty of fresh air and energetic play in the garden and this is extended with walks to local parks. Children are fully involved in choosing and preparing snacks and demonstrate a very good awareness of healthy eating. At lunch time the childminder caters for several different choices of foods and she has a precise understanding of children's individual needs. She liaises closely with parents to share a wide range of information about the children's routines and health issues. Children are making links in their learning as they visit a vegetable garden with the childminder and later they use the fresh ingredients to prepare meals. The children form a sociable group and the childminder steps in to discuss behaviour at an appropriate level for the child's understanding. Toddlers learn to say sorry if they hurt a friend and older ones demonstrate some good examples of politeness as they ask to get down from the table. This respect for others is also developing in the wider context as the childminder uses story books to introduce topics for discussion such as festivals from different cultures, bullying or children who have disabilities. Story times are enriched with props to help children recall the story and they enjoy hearing the childminder read first and then seeing a repeat of the story on the television. They have fun trying to remember the names of animals in popular children's tales.

The childminder is gaining in confidence and understanding of how to use observations to help children make good progress. She is at the stage of trying different methods to ensure her time is used well and that the information she collects is useful in planning how to support children's next steps. Children take part in a varied selection of games and fun activities that help them across all areas of learning. They are able to progress at their own rate and a task to plant cress seeds results in some children extending what they do by adding their own writing or discussing in more depth about growth. The childminder introduces children to counting at a basic level for younger children and offers more challenging games, such as matching pairs, for older ones. Children are able to express their own ideas through imaginative play and they use materials such as chalks on paving outdoors to draw and make marks. A treasure hunt provides a valuable way to introduce some new textures and words as children feel a feather and a shell. The weekly routine includes plenty of outings into the local community to attend groups and events. The childminder learns from staff at settings the children attend what topics they are following so that she can support their learning too. Trips to places such as the local fire station engage the children's interest and the childminder follows up safety messages at home by involving the children in regular practice evacuations. The childminder engages the children in frequent conversations and it is clear from her interactions that she builds up close bonds with the children in her care to help them feel safe and secure.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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