

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY102169
Inspection date	27/04/2010
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 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 registered in 2002 and lives with her husband and three children aged nine, seven and two years in a house in the village of Four Marks, Hampshire. The ground floor of the home is used for play and children are provided with rest facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The home is close to shops, parks, schools, pre-schools and public transport links. The family have cats 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 four children, of whom two may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for three children in the early years age group and two children in the later years age range 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 really benefit from the excellent relationships that exist between the childminder, their parents and others who are involved in their life. The childminder has in-depth knowledge of children's individual character and meets their needs in a calm and consistent manner. She constantly evaluates and monitors the service she provides to families, looking in detail at every aspect. With a minor exception, the childminder's self-assessment is accurate and demonstrates her secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that sleeping children are frequently checked to promote their continued health and well being.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are kept very safe and secure in this organised and well-planned home environment. The childminder is always aiming to improve the space and resources available to children in her home. Improvements made so far have ensured that children have excellent space for play and freedom of movement between the four rooms on the ground floor. Children move with confidence and thoroughly enjoy the mature garden with its two-storey playhouse and plentiful supply of toys for active, energetic play. The childminder has comprehensive policies and procedures in place; she realises the importance of these in helping her to monitor her practice and keep children safe. For example, she reviews the full risk assessment policy every six months, adding any new areas of concern, such as the ongoing garden

and tree work. The childminder ensures that parents are fully aware of the existence of the trampoline and raised swimming pool which has a child safety net which is in place when the pool is not in use; she obtains written consent for children to use this equipment, as was asked of her at the last inspection. The childminder wishes children to have fun and enjoy these if their parents agree. She supervises children directly in the pool, and adapts her level of monitoring when they are on the trampoline, depending on the child's age and ability. The childminder makes use of a baby monitor enabling her to respond to children when they awake from the daily rest, although she does not check on them in person as they sleep to guarantee that all is well. The childminder's good knowledge of child protection issues protects and safeguards children. She has updated the information she holds on this topic and gives each parent a leaflet informing them of the procedures she has to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care. The childminder is able to identify signs or symptoms, which may indicate that a child is at risk. She wishes to continue to increase her knowledge by attending Advanced Child Protection training when a place becomes available.

The childminder has several years of experience in the care of young children and accepted the challenge to implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage wholeheartedly. She demonstrates exceptional commitment to further training, to enhance the qualifications she already holds. She has begun a Level 3 childcare course as she recognises that, to retain her professional status, she should continually update her knowledge and skills. However, she feels strongly that the main reason for providing care for other people's children is to ensure that every child enjoys their childhood as much as possible, as it passes by very quickly. To this end, she gives children a great deal of choice of activities, secure in her ability to promote children's learning at every opportunity. The childminder also makes good use of ideas and suggestions made by other professional child carers, such as use of laminated cards with children's photograph and contact details. She takes these out in the car to assist professionals in emergencies. The childminder's methods of self-evaluation identify when activities or resources need to be adapted to meet children's differing requirements. She provides an inclusive, welcoming environment and is particularly effective in ensuring that her teaching methods stimulate and involve boys. To this end, the childminder uses the outdoor environment whenever possible. In addition, she purchases additional resources to fill in any gaps in children's learning, such as scales for weighing and measuring.

The childminder has well established methods of communication with others who are involved with children. She takes an active role in developing these and approaching any other providers to ask for their activity plans; she shares her records of children's progress willingly to ensure continuity for the children. She has excellent communication with parents and offers them frequent opportunities to see their child's development records; parents are fully involved in decision-making and express high levels of satisfaction with the progress their child makes. The childminder clearly understands the importance of working in partnership with parents, and takes steps to ensure that her knowledge of the family is secure. She keeps note of when family birthdays occur, so she can help the child to celebrate these. Parents receive copies of all her policies and procedures; she asks them to comment on her service and is open to adapting her practice following suggestions

they make. Parents state that their child settles well, and is made to feel truly welcome in the home by the entire family. They value the childminder's flexibility and professionalism and would 'happily recommend' her to others.

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

Children enjoy their time in the childminder's care because she plans ahead and ensures that they are continually stimulated. Each child has the opportunity to take part in wide ranging activities; the childminder adapts her planning, as she understands that children must be able to take advantage of spontaneous opportunities. Children are active learners because the childminder allows them plenty of time to achieve tasks, such as mastering use of a knife and fork at lunch. Children play well together, they are interested in the play materials and make confident choices from these. All are within easy reach and children are secure in exploring their surroundings. Children persist in activities because the childminder constantly encourages. They successfully complete puzzles guided by her to turn the pieces until they fit. Children really appreciate the childminder's involvement in their play; she includes all children and ensures that each one receives equal amounts of her attention. The youngest are beginning to attempt simple words and respond well to the childminder who talks through their activities, encouraging their language skills. They are learning to think and question, for example, if stacking blocks the childminder asks which size comes next, and expects them to identify the colour. Children experience many activities that expand their imagination and creativity. These include potato printing on fabric and bubble blowing, children giggle with pleasure when these go 'pop'.

Children have comfortable relationships with the childminder; the affection she shows children provides a good example to each one and children care for each other. Children feel secure because the childminder keeps to their individual routine wherever possible. She adapts this only if parents agree, to ensure that children can fully enjoy the experiences she offers. Children learn to consider their own safety, particularly outdoors, where the childminder introduces them to the 'green man' on walks to playgroup. She takes many precautions but recognises when older children have developed an understanding of keeping safe, and allows them a little more independence and freedom. The childminder promotes children's self-sufficiency and states that minor falls, under her supervision, are part of the learning process as children grow. Children enjoy a safe, homely environment where the childminder continually assesses risks and makes changes to protect them. For example, she removed steps to the trampoline and installed a radiator cover; this is now a decorative addition to the playroom and proudly displays children's handprints.

Children are developing a sound understanding of the need for good hygiene. They hold out hands for antibacterial gel prior to snack time, where they can choose from a variety of fruits, cheese or yogurt. The childminder encourages healthy eating at all times and agrees meal arrangements with parents. She is happy to serve items that they send in or to prepare a meal if this best suits the children's dietary needs. The childminder plans her meals and snacks in advance and keeps

parents fully informed, using her food and activity planner.

Children are well prepared for the future as the childminder expects them to be considerate of others and show respect at all times. She is firm and consistent if children behave in ways that may exclude or harm others. Children learn to play together as the childminder makes them see the benefits of this. No child feels disadvantaged, for example, if doing a puzzle each child has a piece and the childminder's undivided attention until it is successfully in place. Children are learning to be polite and from an early age attempt 'ta' as a thank you. They are becoming caring, thoughtful individuals who want to help those younger than themselves. They clearly recognise each other's needs, and will rush to find another child's favourite comforter. The childminder helps children to be aware of their own community and the wider world. Children are involved in activities locally; the childminder organises activities relating to harvest festival, or that of Divali so children learn to appreciate other cultures and traditions.

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	1

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	1
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	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
--	-----