

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY281863
Inspection date	08/07/2010
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
Type of setting	Childminder

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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 childminding

The childminder was registered in 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 14 years in Ipswich, Suffolk. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding. A secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The childminder has two pet cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding 13 children, nine of whom are in the early years age range. All children attend on a part time basis. The children live in the local area and some also attend sessions at local pre-schools and nurseries. The childminder's husband often works as the childminder's assistant. When working together, they may care for a maximum of 10 children aged under eight years, no more than six of whom may be in the early years age range. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is currently supporting a number of children who are learning English as an additional language.

The childminder takes and collects children from local pre-schools, nurseries and primary schools, and takes children to toddler groups and childminder drop-in sessions. She holds a relevant early years qualification to level 3, and is currently working towards a higher qualification. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder successfully meets the needs of all the children in her care. She supports them to make good progress in all aspects of their learning and development, using observation and assessment systems that are generally effective. Unquestionable commitment is given to partnership working with parents and carers, which contributes significantly to ensuring children's complex needs are met and any gaps in their achievement are narrowed. Systems for self-evaluation are effective and the childminder demonstrates positive commitment to extending her professional development through ongoing training. As a result, her capacity to improve the early years provision for children is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the assessments further to give a summary of each child's achievements and ensure their progress towards the early learning goals is tracked effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates good understanding of her duties in keeping children safe from harm. She has prioritised relevant training to enable her to confidently recognise the signs of possible abuse and neglect, and has written a clear policy setting out the procedure for referring any concerns to the local child protection agencies. The childminder is mindful to ensure children are not left alone with people whose suitability has not been checked, and in respect of this, both herself and her assistant have completed all the required checks. The environment is maintained to a very safe and secure standard, due to the robust risk assessments carried out each day. For example, the childminder takes steps to verify the identity of all visitors to the home and keeps the front gate to the premises securely locked. This ensures children can make good use of the outdoor space without the potential of leaving the premises unsupervised. The childminder has dedicated the ground floor of her house to childminding, creating a very spacious and child-friendly space for children to play, relax and eat. The range of toys and equipment is good, and a majority of the resources are set out appropriately to enable children to choose and explore for themselves.

The childminder establishes highly positive relationships with parents and carers. Her approach is extremely welcoming and supportive, ensuring parents feel reassured and confident in sharing information about their child's needs. The childminder places emphasis on keeping parents fully informed of their children's achievements, well-being and development. For example, she actively shares each child's weekly development sheets with their parents, as well as a scrapbook containing several meaningful photographs of the children's activities. Parents are extremely happy with their children's progress and welcome the childminder's guidance about ways they can support their learning at home. For example, the childminder provides a handwriting book for children to take home after they show an interest in writing letters in the setting. The childminder embraces the cultural backgrounds and languages of each family, often asking them to provide information about their celebrations and traditions so they can be incorporated into the planning for children. The childminder promotes inclusive practice when communicating with parents, making use of her ability to speak five different languages and ensuring written information, such as policies and procedures, is explained clearly from the beginning. The childminder is committed to identifying any child's need for additional support as early as possible, sharing information with parents, interagency teams and practitioners at the other settings they attend. As a result, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities experience consistent support from different adults and their development in relation to their starting points is good.

The childminder has a keen desire to develop the early years provision further, and has committed to studying for a relevant foundation degree qualification. Through this course and completion of the Ofsted self-evaluation form, she has developed a clear understanding of what is done well at the setting and has identified realistic, yet challenging, targets to improve outcomes for children. Since the last inspection

the childminder has widened her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and is now better placed to implement the requirements of the framework to benefit the children's welfare, learning and development.

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

Children form strong bonds with the childminder and her family which helps them to feel reassured and safe in their surroundings. They show a keen interest in learning, happily exploring the space available to them as they flow freely between the three child-friendly playrooms and seek out their favourite toys and games. For example, children confidently help themselves to the felt-tip pens before finding a comfortable seat at the table. The childminder intervenes sensitively to foster their interest in writing, showing them how to form recognisable letters and encouraging them to hear and say the corresponding phonic sounds. Children are beginning to solve different number problems in their play. For example, when completing a number puzzle, they find the total number of strawberries in two groups by counting all of them together. The childminder consolidates their learning as she prompts them to count the strawberries again and to check they have completed the calculation correctly. A range of planned cooking activities are popular with the children as they find out about food from around the world, including an opportunity to make traditional Portuguese bread. They use good mathematical skills as they count out the required spoonfuls of flour, and talk about adding more or less water to the mixture. When the childminder notices that some of the younger children are reluctant to touch the sticky bread dough, she plans other opportunities for them to explore textures, such as sand and paint, with their hands. In time, they become more confident and are keen to get involved with messy craft activities. Children's independence is fostered well by the organisation and layout of the equipment. From a young age they are able to access the purpose-built toilet and sink facilities for themselves, and can reach their own coats and bags from the hooks that are mounted at an appropriate height on the wall.

Since the last inspection the childminder has developed her planning systems and is now using observation as a tool to help her to identify the new skills children are developing and any areas where they need more support. She records short written observations on each child's weekly development sheet and assesses these carefully to identify the next steps in children's learning. Although the childminder is mindful to review the children's records to ensure all six areas of learning are being covered in their learning, she is less confident in using the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance to periodically summarise children's progress towards the early learning goals. This means that any gaps in children's achievement are not identified as systematically as they could be. Support for children who are learning English as an additional language is a key strength as the childminder clearly values linguistic diversity. Consequently, children are growing in confidence in using their home language in the setting and feel valued as the childminder and other children are able to respond to them with key words and gestures that they recognise.

Children appreciate the importance of respecting the needs of others and can be observed treating each other with genuine care and respect. From a young age, they manage turn-taking and sharing well given their ages and stages of development. The childminder actively praises this positive behaviour, and calmly steps in to diffuse any minor disagreements between children. The childminder fosters open discussions with children to help them to develop positive awareness of differences in culture, religion and disability. For example, she talks to children about the Muslim faith and how Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan. Children lead healthy lifestyles and have daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air. They have access to a good range of physical play equipment in the garden and exercise further as they enjoy visits to the local park. The daily routines help to protect children from the spread of infection, such as the use of liquid soap and individual paper towels when they wash their hands. The childminder helps children to understand how they can keep themselves and others safe. For example, children consider road safety whilst they are out walking and older children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are reminded to play with small construction toys where younger children and babies cannot reach them.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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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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