

Inspection date	25/10/2013
Previous inspection date	31/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- The quality of teaching is effective and consistent in supporting children as they make good progress in their learning and development.
- The environment is used to good effect in offering children wide and varied practical experiences to develop independence, explore and discover as they develop the characteristics of effective learning.
- The childminder supports children and their families in settling in and enjoying their time and experiences, forging strong partnerships with parents and others involved in their children's care, learning and development.

It is not yet good because

- The childminder has failed to meet the legal requirement of notifying Ofsted of significant changes which affect the provision; however, she did maintain adult to child ratios because she adjusted her practice.
- Some aspects of monitoring are not wholly effective in setting firm targets for further professional development or reviewing assessments where some children may have shown very slight regression.
- The presence and behaviour of some older children impacts, at times, on the care of younger children, particularly when children demonstrate challenging responses to directions and boundaries.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed practice between childminder, assistants and the children indoors and outside.
- The inspector spoke with the adults and children during the course of the inspection.
- The inspector carried out a safety check on the premises indoors and outside.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation, including policies and procedures, suitability checks for the adults living and working on the premises and children's admission and developmental records.
- The inspector took account of the views and comments from parents in written documentation obtained by the provider.

Inspector

Patricia Webb

Full Report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2005 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives in the property with her partner and their three children aged nine years, five years and 10 months. She works at times with a number of assistants and also offers childcare on domestic premises as part of the flexible provision. Children are cared for in the lounge, playroom, baby room and kitchen of the home with additional use of the extensive outdoor spaces and building used as an art room. The family has a dog, a hedgehog and a variety of reptiles.

The childminder operates from Monday to Friday all year round. Occasional weekend cover is also offered by arrangement. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 30 children attending, of whom 18 are in the early years age group. The childminder provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. She supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She is a member of the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years and holds a relevant early years qualification at level 3. She is also qualified in Forest School leadership.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- develop the arrangements for monitoring practice and assessment and supervising assistants more rigorously in order to identify why any gaps in children's learning and development may occur and promote professional development further.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- review the organisation of the provision with particular regard to older children's behaviour, so that their presence in the setting does not impact on the care, welfare and learning of the younger children.
- strengthen the systems for self-evaluation in order to overcome weaknesses that have been highlighted as a result of the process.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are making good progress in their learning and development as a result of the strong and consistent teaching offered by the childminder and her assistants. Children explore, discover and investigate their world, as they utilise the vast range of natural resources available in the setting. They relish their Forest School activities as they walk to the nearby woods and develop their imagination making dens and creating mud and stick hedgehogs. The childminder and her assistants talk constantly as children play and engage in their activities, promoting their acquisition of spoken language. The childminder extends children's thinking and offers challenge as she asks them about the different sizes of the bubbles, points out the marks their muddy footprints are making on the patio. This is skilfully expanded as children fetch paper, lay the sheets on the patio and trample over them, noting the different patterns on each other's boots. This encourages children to be more observant and understand the way marks can be made using various media.

The childminder and her assistants weave the learning through active play both indoors and outside. Children learn to care for their environment and delight in showing their families just how dirty they can get when climbing, testing the mud and tending to the plants in the garden. Indoors, they learn about how to care for various animals and have watched the hatching of chicks and snakes with interest. The childminder is aware of how children develop and adjusts planning to take account of children's varying attention spans, levels of interest and engagement, particularly where some children may be identified as benefitting from additional support. She works closely with parents and any other professionals to develop a consistent approach for each child, supporting them as they gain the necessary skills and attributes in preparation for the next steps in their early education. Parents appreciate the use of such strategies as having books to take home and read with their children, noting how this helps children prepare for school and how such routines and expectations would not come as 'such a shock' when it happens.

Children's progress is observed and assessed by the childminder and her assistants and for the most part these are accurate and reflective of children's stages of development. Occasionally, some slight regression in development is not always reflected in next steps set or noted by the childminder when monitoring assessment procedures with the assistants. However, in practice, children's attainment is promoted in all areas of learning over time. The childminder has delegated some responsibility to an assistant with regard to completing the progress check at age two to ensure consistency, while other assistants become more familiar with the process.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children form close relationships with the childminder and her assistants, knowing them well and looking to them for reassurance and support. This helps children settle with ease. As part of the childminder's extended provision, older children also attend and there are occasions when their behaviour impacts on the provision for younger children. For

example, some older children take time to respond to adult direction and challenge the boundaries set. This results in some younger children's routines being interrupted. The childminder and her assistants offer verbal praise to acknowledge children's efforts and achievements, promoting their self-esteem as they develop friendships with each other.

Children follow the positive role models offered by the childminder and her assistants as routines are implemented to promote health and well-being. Assessments indicate when and how children are supported in toilet training and hand washing to minimise the spread of infection. This is particularly well managed when children access messy play activities outdoors. The childminder has undertaken additional training in order to meet the specific health needs of children and attends to minor accidents and injuries appropriately. Parents are kept fully informed of any such incidents and sign the written records as acknowledgement. The childminder has developed strong links with the schools and other settings children attend to ensure that any incidents happening in those settings are reported back to parents. This promotes continuity of care for the children.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals and snacks, as the childminder discusses individual dietary needs and preferences with parents from the outset. They enjoy the social interaction that takes place as they sit around the kitchen table and younger toddlers are supported in honing their self-feeding skills. Children learn about how foods support their health and pick some of the produce grown on site to add to their meals. Parents recall how children have talked animatedly about the recent blackberry picking activity and how children considered the sweet and sour tastes among their crop.

Parents also appreciate the support their children are given in becoming aware of safety, particularly when walking in the rural areas. This helps children gain valuable skills for the future as they learn to listen for traffic and understand the importance of using the high visibility jackets so that they can be seen. They enjoy active play outside, accessing fresh air daily and testing out their confidence on large climbing equipment and the trees in the natural environment. Risk assessments are conducted daily and any amendments are made accordingly. For example, the childminder has reviewed the assessment for the use of the trampoline while awaiting the new safety netting, as the current one is torn. The assistants ensure that supervision is stringent on the equipment and use these occurrences to inform children of such hazards as they begin to adjust their own activity too.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

There are weaknesses in leadership and management which have resulted in some regulations not being fully met. This has contributed to lapses in the overall quality of practice. The childminder has failed to notify Ofsted of significant changes to the provision with regard to the birth of her third child. However, she did take appropriate action to adjust the numbers of children cared for and continues to meet the required adult to child ratios.

The childminder is aware that she has not updated the self-evaluation of practice recently,

although she has identified some improvements, such as developing her own management skills further, through relevant study. She conducts appraisals to monitor the practice of herself and her assistants and identify any training needs in order to develop the quality of teaching further. This monitoring is not fully effective in ensuring that she is fully aware of some minor dips in children's attainment although she is confident that her assistants take account of this in their practical planning and practice. Some assistants have not yet completed relevant training to consolidate their practice as indicated in their appraisals. The childminder offers the assistants opportunities to maintain their mandatory training, such as first aid and child protection awareness, although she was not fully aware of the expiry of one assistant's first aid certificate some time ago. However, the childminder does ensure that there are sufficient adults on duty with a current first aid qualification to meet requirements.

The childminder has a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. She is aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and is confident in the action that would be taken to report and monitor any concerns about a child in her care. She follows the requirements for recruiting and vetting adults in the household, and her assistants, to reassure parents of their children's safety and welfare. The childminder also holds regular meetings with her assistants and they are aware of how their personal conduct may impact on their professional roles with regard to maintaining their suitability. The childminder is aware of the steps she would take if she had any concerns about the conduct or suitability of any of the adults and this is supported by the clear policies and procedures in place. Risk assessments are carried out daily and staff take suitable steps to reinforce children's safety, particularly when children have handled some of the animals or enjoyed the Forest School experiences.

Parents comment most favourably in the questionnaires about their children's progress and enjoyment of being with the childminder. For example, parents relate how they 'want children to get dirty; part of growing up; would rather have a child that climbs trees than worry if their clothes get dirty!' Another comment indicates the effectiveness of the settling in routines, saying that 'settling in was great; (child) forgets I exist when we arrive'. The childminder is using various strategies to engage parents actively in their children's care, learning and development, strengthening the partnerships between children's learning at home and with the childminder. This promotes consistency for children and also helps to prepare them effectively for the next big steps in their lives.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY307281
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	940050
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	30
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	31/03/2009
Telephone number	

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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