

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 223734
Inspection date 05/02/2009
Inspector Juliette Jennings

Type of setting Childminder

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband, who is also registered as a childminder, in a house in Shrewsbury, Shropshire. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a large garden which is used frequently. There are three cats as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, or 12 children when working with another childminder, and is currently minding five children under five years. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 14 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and attends and is involved in organising several groups on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and an approved childminding network and provides early education for three and four-year-olds. In addition, she organises a variety of sessions for parents, carers and their children in Babysign and Sing and Sign.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Excellent systems, detailed policies and specific procedures are implemented so that all children are very well cared for in a secure, caring and inclusive environment, with skilled and knowledgeable support from the childminder. Partnerships with parents and others are extremely strong and this fully enables a consistent approach so that all children can develop to their fullest potential and make very good progress towards the early learning goals. Children relish an extensive range of child-initiated play opportunities, both indoors and in an exciting outdoor area, as well as superb access to local places of interest and a wide variety of groups. The childminder uses her extensive knowledge, skilful techniques, enthusiasm and her belief that children learn best through exciting play opportunities to fully support and enable children to thrive as unique individuals. Ongoing self-evaluation and access to training enables the childminder to continually improve the provision for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- provide more detail in the record of risk assessments of the premises and on all type of outings.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder works extremely well with her co-childminder to ensure that all children are warmly cared for in an interesting, welcoming and homely environment. She implements and continually reviews robust systems to ensure that the individual needs of each and every child who attends are provided for. For example, extensive, understandable and detailed written policies and procedures are in place which reflect the excellent practice evident in the childminding setting. These are readily available to all parents because they are given a copy as soon as their children start, during the initial visit.

Partnerships with children, parents and families are extremely strong and allow all to work together to ensure that children learn and develop as unique individuals with a strong sense of self. Home link books are completed for children, and individual communication diaries using Makaton symbols are developed which fully involve parents, children and the childminder. This form of sign language is used frequently through the day for all children to promote language and communication development. Notice boards are available which highlight the exciting activities that children have been engaged in whilst attending, and photographs and displays are extensive, which enables ongoing reflection on what children have been enjoying. Documentation recording details about children and their families, including appropriate consents and other information, is held confidentially and allows the childminder to provide a consistent care approach in line with the wishes of parents.

The systems and procedures in place for safeguarding are extensive and robust, working very effectively in practice. Daily visual safety checks and regular completion of safety checks on equipment, resources and the environment, both indoors, outdoors and on outings, means that children are cared for in a safe environment where they are supported and fully encouraged to explore and investigate. For example, the conservatory floor has been covered with sand to enable an imaginary play area at the request of the children and there is a area in the garden where children can safely explore water play. Safety in and around the home is very good and ensures that children remain safe in the childminder's care, although more detail is required in the written record of risk assessments for the environment and for outings in order to fully meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A safeguarding procedure is available in writing and the childminder ensures that she is fully up-to-date with current local safeguarding procedures. In addition, she attends additional training and has extensive experience and knowledge from her experience in childminding which means that she is fully aware of safeguarding processes to ensure the welfare of all children in her care.

Access to training is frequent and knowledge gained is translated into continually improving outcomes for all children. For example, recent training in Makaton and Baby Sign has led to the organisation of classes which other carers, parents and childminders can attend with the children they care for. Other training accessed is used to continually reflect on the learning environment and broad range of

experiences children are offered, with a strong ethos on the importance of valuable play opportunities to help children thrive, develop, learn and reach their full potential. Most recently she has been amongst one of a number of local childminders to have gained accreditation in order to provide early education for children. She has clear aims and objectives in relation to what she wants to do to develop her inspirational childminding service so that all children continue to be given excellent opportunities to develop as unique individuals.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children thoroughly enjoy an extensive range of healthy eating opportunities. Healthy snacks of fruit, cheese, yoghurts and vegetables are provided alongside drinks of milk or water. Balanced meals are provided for children in discussion with parents or parents can provide packed lunches. In addition, children have fantastic opportunities to taste a wide variety of foods when they go out to local restaurants, or enjoy food tasting at the setting. For example, recently children enjoyed a trip to a local Chinese restaurant where they tried a wide range of tasty food, and attempted to develop their skills in using chopsticks to eat the noodles, rice and even the ice cream that was offered for dessert. Records and documentation are in place to ensure children's health needs are met, with appropriate information about likes, dislikes, allergies and dietary requirements readily available.

Children thoroughly enjoy an extensive range of child-led, free play opportunities in a homely, fun, and relaxed environment. Toys and resources are extensive and most are available at low-level so that children are able to access their favourite activities as and when they wish to. Children's ideas are listened too and nurtured into exciting themes which last for extensive periods of time, with the skill, enthusiasm and knowledge of the childminder enabling children to fully explore their chosen interest. For example, a recent interest in knights and dragons led to plentiful imaginary play in the garden area, searches for dragons in local countryside areas using maps, numerous creative opportunities and development of stories. Children begin to develop an awareness of keeping themselves safe, for example, whilst reinforcing road safety rules on the way home from school.

Children are very well supported and encouraged to become independent, make decisions about what they want to do and develop their self-esteem because the childminder nurtures these skills very well. The ethos of learning through play is very much at the heart of this inspirational childminding setting. Children enjoy child-initiated play in the main playroom, upstairs in the sensory rooms or the den, in the sand filled conservatory or in the exciting space in the garden. In addition, children relish opportunities to visit local farms to learn about animals and nature, explore and investigate in the weekly woodland visits and develop relationships with others whilst they access local activity groups. The childminder is very good at providing activities and resources which interest the children, whilst helping with their development and progress towards the early learning goals. Systems for ongoing assessment and planning to help children progress towards the early learning goals are established and work effectively to highlight individual progress.

Children enjoy exploring the snow in the garden and observing the snowflakes as they fall from the sky. They make snowballs and explore the texture and feel of the snow in their hands. All children are fully enabled to develop their imaginary skills when they develop role play situations in various areas of the house and garden. They begin to learn about other cultures and traditions when they become involved in a wide variety of activities to celebrate Chinese New Year or Thanksgiving. The childminder supports all the children in a capable, calm and caring manner, offering sensitive direction and discussion whilst encouraging a respectful, relaxed and friendly environment. In addition, the close partnership with parents and other agencies ensures that children's individual needs and routines are accommodated very well within the well-organised childminding space.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.