

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	223454
Inspection date	12/08/2009
Inspector	Deborah Ball

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 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 1994. She lives with her husband and three adult children in the rural hamlet of Pencoyd, Herefordshire. The ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Children are taken on local visits and outings. The family have a dog and a cat as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time. There are currently five children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register.

The childminder has procedures to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The premises are accessible via the front entrance which has one low step. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children's welfare, learning and development are adequately promoted in a friendly and homely environment. All children are fully included as the childminder adapts activities so that individual children are given opportunities to participate at their own level. Children are active and are given many opportunities to learn about the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle. The childminder works in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that each individual child's needs and routines are met. The systems for self-evaluation are not yet fully developed to ensure continuous improvements are made in all areas. However, the childminder has made many improvements since her last inspection and demonstrates a commitment to developing her practice and raising standards of care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop planning for individual children by using the observations and assessments to help them move on to the next stage in their development and to ensure all six areas of learning are consistently covered
- improve the process for self-assessment to ensure continual improvements are made in all areas.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very happy and settled due to the childminder's positive and caring approach. Their needs are generally met through effective organisation. The childminder adapts the available space for different types of play, which enables children to make free choices throughout the day. A weekly routine includes regular outings to ensure children have opportunities for plenty of exercise and fresh air. They have access to a variety of appropriate activities, which include opportunities to develop their independence and confidence. Inclusive practice is generally promoted as the childminder encourages children's positive self-esteem and all the children are able to join in with the available activities. Positive relationships with the parents and carers ensure each child's specific welfare and education needs are met. The childminder initially gathers relevant information concerning individual children's starting points and uses this to help them settle into the environment. Information is exchanged through a daily journal and verbal communication, which ensures parents and carers are kept informed of how their children spend their day. Parents and carers are also made aware of all the childminding arrangements and the procedures followed by the childminder. These are shared with parents during initial visits so that they have a sound understanding of the care and learning opportunities provided for their children.

Children's welfare is protected as the childminder has a suitable understanding of safeguarding children procedures. She is aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and is confident of the need to record and refer any concerns that she may have. The childminder has devised an effective system for carrying out the required risk assessments to ensure children's safety is assured at all times. She is vigilant with regards to safety and carries out daily visual safety checks of her home and equipment. A range of safety precautions are in place to protect children, for example, unused electric plug sockets are covered and a safety gate prevents children from having unsupervised access to the first floor.

The childminder demonstrates a commitment to improvement and has worked hard to address the actions set at her last inspection. She has worked with the local authority to broaden her knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and as a result has improved outcomes for children. However, systems to monitor and reflect upon her provision are still at their infancy and therefore her ability to fully identify future areas for improvement is impeded. In addition, the childminder regularly meets with other local childminders which provides the opportunity to share good practice ideas. All required policies, procedures and documentation are now suitably maintained.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are settled and happy within the environment. They are comfortable with the childminder and have built a warm and trusting relationship. Children are making satisfactory progress in most of the areas of learning. Although, the childminder plans stimulating and interesting activities for all the children, this is not organised to ensure all the six areas of learning are consistently covered. The

childminder knows the children very well and uses this information to adapt spontaneous activities so that each individual child is given the opportunity to develop their skills and learning. However, she does not use the informal observations and assessments she makes to inform further planning to ensure each child is given every opportunity to move on to the next stage in their development.

Children's independence is developed and nurtured as they make decisions about what they would like to play with. The childminder dedicates her time to helping children become settled and joining in their play. Consequently, they are well-occupied and enjoy using the various age-appropriate play equipment and resources to develop their skills. Children thoroughly enjoy baking bread and cakes with the childminder to eat as a treat at snack time. The children have opportunities to extend their imagination, creativity and problem solving skills. For example, they enjoy using the jigsaw puzzles, concentrating and persevering with trying to find the required shapes to fit into the available spaces. They enjoy joining in with collage and painting activities to create colourful pictures and construct dens using tents, blankets and cushions. Regular walks in the surrounding countryside enable the children to learn about a variety of soft fruits and plants, blow dandelion clocks, look at a range of animal tracks and observe lambs and piglets. In addition, children learn about the changing seasons and food production through observing farmers ploughing and baling hay. Children's speech and language is developed through their love of books and stories, as well as encouragement to join in with relaxed everyday discussions and conversations. Children have formed harmonious relationships and play happily alongside each other. They have access to resources and activities that promote positive images of diversity.

Children's good health and well-being is promoted as they have daily opportunities for physical indoor and outdoor activities. They relish playing and exercising in the outdoor fresh air. Children are given many opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy taking part in various local outings, such as, visits to the local shops, to neighbouring farms to collect eggs and attend groups where they have opportunities to socialise with other children. The childminder encourages parents to provide healthy packed lunches and snacks for their children. The children learn the importance of good hygiene through effective hand washing practice and the childminder has good procedures in place to ensure the spread of infection is minimised. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents and for administering medication if requested. Children are kept safe as the childminder ensures they are supervised at all times and discussions are held about how they can keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about fire safety when taking part in regular emergency evacuation practises. Children's positive behaviour is praised and they are encouraged to share and take turns.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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