

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY307378
Inspection date	20/03/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott

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 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 2005 and holds qualified teacher status. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine years and seven years in the village of Litchborough, close to Towcester in Northamptonshire. The childminder uses the whole of the ground floor, plus two bedrooms for childminding, and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children in this age group. She is also caring for six older children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder drives to the local schools and pre-schools to deliver and collect children. The childminder supports children with English as an additional language. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision is outstanding. Children thrive in a setting that is very child-friendly and meets the needs of children of all ages, clearly recognising their uniqueness and individuality. Each child receives support according to their individual needs enabling them to take part in all activities in a fully inclusive way. The children make rapid progress and greatly benefit from the professional skills of this secondary school science teacher. Through excellent self-evaluation of activities and procedures the childminder promptly identifies and acts upon any areas for improvement. She is continually striving to offer the very best possible care and education to the 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:

- continue to develop the existing excellent practice through drawing on the full range of quality improvement tools available.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children enjoy an exemplary quality of care in this setting, supported by well-kept, clear policies, procedures and records. Parents can read or receive these by e-mail or paper copy on request and this includes an exceptionally clear complaints procedure. Posters and certificates are displayed on a portable notice board for parents information. The childminder is a mother and a qualified science teacher who capably demonstrates that she can transfer these skills to her childminding business, enabling her to offer high-quality inclusive care and education to the

children. Thoroughly-detailed risk assessments are carried out visually on a daily basis and written assessments are periodically completed for every area of the home and for every type of outing. The childminder shows a passionate commitment to continuous improvement. For example, she regularly reviews her procedures and continuously seeks to improve them, as shown by the evidence supplied in the self-evaluation form. The childminder identified reflective practice as an area which she wishes to continue to develop. Extremely-effective links with the parents and carers, together with the pre-school and school involved in the care and education of the children, enables the childminder to tailor activities to the individual children in her care.

The childminder successfully develops the activities, and offers a broad, stimulating range that offer challenge to children of all ages. This has a very positive impact as the children learn to work together and respect each other, thereby effectively improving overall, the early years provision and outcomes for children. Informative daily diaries and regular discussions ensure the parents are kept extremely well informed about the care their child receives. They have expressed their confidence and pleasure in the provision through the regular questionnaires the childminder instigates and the detailed information shared when a child first starts at the provision. The childminder demonstrates an extremely good understanding of the procedures regarding the safeguarding of children and a very high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. Clear records of accidents, incidents and medication, shared with the parents, ensure the needs of the children are fully met. All equipment and toys are checked regularly for safety. Very effective procedures ensure children's health and well-being are promoted throughout the day.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder gives outstanding support to learning. The education programme is extremely well organised with themes and activities tailored to the interests and abilities of the children in attendance. These cover all aspects of the early learning goals, ensuring children enjoy a broad, stimulating variety of activities and are designed to meet each child's developmental needs. The childminder has a robust knowledge and understanding of how different activities support intellectual development and is particularly skilled in promoting investigative and exploratory play. The childminder asks if the children might like to guide the inspector around the house and they respond with remarkable and demonstrative confidence and self-esteem. The children describe how to choose a towel to dry hands after washing them to get rid of the germs which will make tummies poorly, and how to put the used towel in the washing bag.

Children are active learners and the childminder constantly suggests ways in which they might solve everyday problems instead of providing easy solutions. For example, the children ask for help in completing a duck shaped jigsaw and the childminder suggests turning the piece over and seeing if the nobbly part of the piece will fit into the hole. Children develop their sensory play by examining the properties of 'Gelli Baff' in a washing up bowl in the kitchen. Although reluctant to touch the substance with their hands, the childminder gently encourages them to

explore the green jelly with beakers and bowls, asking open questions to elicit critical thinking and mathematical language. Children test out hypotheses and discover that there is sufficient jelly to fill the big bowl to the top. They gaze in awe and wonder as the final addition of white crystals dissolves the jelly to a watery consistency once again.

Exceedingly well-documented observations, very closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage, are maintained on all children prior to starting school. The childminder also monitors the development of the older children ensuring the activities appropriately offer plenty of stimulation and challenge. Regular discussion with parents keep them very well informed of their child's development and the childminder works closely with them when addressing the next steps for learning. As a result children progress extremely well with very high levels of achievement in relation to their age and stage of development.

Children's welfare is very effectively promoted through the clear procedures and guidelines used by the childminder. She gives affection and security to all children in her care and constantly introduces new initiatives to improve their health and well-being. They enjoy regular daily exercise and benefit from daily fresh air and local outings to extend their experiences appropriately. Children's diaries provide an account of bubble wrap being taken outside into the garden to see who could make the loudest pop when it was jumped on, along with counting games. Whilst sharing a book chosen by the children, the childminder facilitates a wide ranging discussion about road safety and the fire service, drawing the learning from child-led play. She elicits the children's level of knowledge and understanding and discovers that they know that '999' is the emergency number to call. Children effectively learn good behaviour through the timely and sensitive intervention of the childminder in conflict situations. The policies, procedures and practice, unique to this setting, are extremely robust and implemented with a very high level of consistency. The indoor and outdoor environment, together with the equipment and toys, is extremely well maintained to provide a very safe and welcoming environment for the children.

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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary 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.