

Inspection report for early years provision

Inspection date	18/02/2009
Inspector	Juliet Eileen Hartridge
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 2008 and lives with her husband and young child in Torquay within walking distance of local schools and other amenities. The home is accessed up a flight of eight steps. Children have access to the whole house and securely enclosed garden. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for up to five children aged one to eight years. She is currently caring for a total of seven children on a part-time basis, six of whom are in the early years age range. The childminder has qualified teacher status and is a member of the local childminding network. The family have two cats and tropical fish in a tank.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision is outstanding. Children are happy and very settled and greatly benefit from the childminder's professional approach. She has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and how children learn through play and interesting experiences. She works closely with the children's parents and carers which helps the childminder plan and provide for the individual needs of each child in her care. The childminder has undertaken a detailed evaluation of her provision and has an enthusiastic and strong commitment to making continuous improvements in order to benefit the quality of care she provides 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:

- continuing to develop systems to involve parents in sharing information about their children's play and interests at home.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a meticulous approach to documentation, which ensures that children's safety and welfare is particularly well supported. A very comprehensive range of policies and procedures most effectively underpins the childminder's practice. This includes detailed risk assessments of the home, garden and outings which are reviewed and updated when any changes take place. The home is very clean, well maintained and safe and secure for all children. The front door is locked and the garden area is securely enclosed and children are learning about managing their own safety when they are reminded about playing or using furniture safely, or when safety is discussed when they are out and about. A fire evacuation plan is displayed on the notice board, and is regularly practised with the children and logged. Safety equipment including safety gates, baby sleep

monitors and fire blanket are installed. The childminder has a secure understanding of her responsibility to safeguard all children in her care. She is very aware of the steps she would take regarding child protection concerns. She has a comprehensive safeguarding policy as well as other supporting information, which is readily available for parents and carers to read, and shared with them when new children are enrolled.

The childminder has excellent self-awareness, and has undertaken a detailed self evaluation of her provision. She reflects on her practice and carefully considers improvements to make in the future to further benefit the children in her care. She also evaluates activities as children play, for example deciding to add colour to the 'gloop' next time, to enable children to more easily see the marks they make in the mixture on the white tray. The childminder has a most enthusiastic approach towards training and updating her knowledge and skills and is currently working towards Level 3 Home Based Childcare. She has attended first aid, safeguarding and Early Years Foundation Stage training, as well as various workshops during the past year.

The childminder communicates most effectively with parents and carers, and has a professional yet flexible approach. A comprehensive range of documentation, including contracts, information and consent forms ensure that children are cared for according to their individual needs and their parents and carers wishes. The childminder further enhances communication by using daily diaries, and the children's learning journey records contain photos of the children at play, which are all regularly shared with parents and carers. The childminder is considering how she can further include children's families and home life in this process. The notice board contains helpful information, including the registration certificate, and details of the outings and activities proposed for the week. Each parent is given a friendly and informative prospectus, which outlines in detail what the childminder provides as well as her policies and procedures. Regular newsletters are given to parents and carers to update them on changes, and provide information on interesting topics including baby signing, and children and their families are invited to parties and celebrations including harvest or Halloween. Parents and carers are also included in the childminder's self evaluation process when they contribute to her compliments or complaints log, and complete questionnaires on the provision. These various measures ensure that families are most effectively included and very well informed regarding the care of their children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder is very well organised and maximises the available space to create a welcoming and inclusive play and learning environment, where the wide range of resources are tidily invitingly stored for children to easily select. Toddlers enjoy using the rattles and mirrors which are displayed on the safety gates for them to explore at their height, and a wide range of books are readily accessible near to ground level where all children can freely choose. Good use is made of the outdoor area which is inviting and suitable for children to play outside in all weathers. The childminder interacts with the children with warmth and good humour, sensitively encouraging their enjoyment of play and their developing skills. She is firmly

committed to providing children with a wide range of life experiences through the interesting outings they enjoy together. They experience nature and the world around them when they observe animals and birds at a farm nature trail, the zoo and Living Coasts. They have excellent opportunities to socialise with other children and adults at various Sure Start groups, soft play centres or music groups.

Children enjoy a very good range of interesting activities which are flexibly planned around their interests, stages of development and the reassuringly familiar daily routines. The childminder has a clear understanding of the children's interests and needs, and this is very well supported by the spontaneous or timed observations she undertakes whilst children play. This information is recorded in the children's learning diaries and used to make plans and set simple targets, in order to help them progress onto the next stage in their learning journey. Children's communication and language skills are very well supported as the childminder chats to them about what they are doing, and encourages their developing language, by echoing or developing what they say. Children delight in hearing their favourite stories, snuggling together to enjoy a favourite book. Younger children are skilfully included and their concentration is promoted as the childminder encourages them to help turn the pages, or point out and name their favourite characters. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their creativity. They regularly enjoy moulding and cutting playdough, using paints and making marks with chalk. They have excellent opportunities to use their senses when they enjoy heuristic play and a variety of tactile experiences. This includes gloop, jelly, and cooked pasta to explore with their fingers. Younger children are sensitively included as they are encouraged to watch if they are not yet ready to join in and children watch and listen in fascination as the water drips onto the plastic mat from the melting ice. Children learn about diversity in a positive and meaningful way, when they hear numbers and songs in Spanish, or celebrate harvest festival together and taste a variety of breads from around the world.

Children are learning about healthy lifestyles. They have excellent opportunities to enjoy outdoor exercise as they play with balls, explore the sand or climb the slide. Children are learning about appropriate hygiene routines as they wash their hands after outdoor play or before lunch. The childminder explains that she now has to wash her hands after nappy changing time. Children enjoy delicious home cooked meals and have healthy fruit snacks. They learn about where the food comes from when they help to mash the potatoes for their fish pie, or enjoy various baking activities. Water is close to hand for children to drink when they are thirsty. Children are well behaved and the childminder supports their behaviour in a positive way, calmly explaining her expectations and praising children when they have done well. She makes tidy up time interesting and fun for children and is a positive role model as she treats children with respect and courtesy.

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 registration.

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.