

# — Wheeldon, Claire Elizabeth

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number** EY375008  
**Inspection date** 08/12/2008  
**Inspector** Paula Jane Hayhow

**Setting address** 53 Park Lane, Henlow, Bedfordshire, SG16 6AT

**Telephone number** 01462 416439  
**Email** claire@grasshoppers\_montessori.co.uk  
**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. She lives with her husband and two children aged three and five years in Henlow, Bedfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house, apart from the major bedroom's en-suite and study, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's house is via a step. The family has a cat and two guinea pigs as pets.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and occasional school holidays. The childminder works with assistants and a childminder during the week. When working alone she is registered to provide two places for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). When working with an assistants and a childminder, there are places for seven children in the EYFS. There are currently five children attending who are within this age group. The childminder receives funding for early education places. The children live locally. Three children attend other settings such as a pre-school, nursery and a childminder.

The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to eight years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the Early Years age range. There is currently one child in this age range. The childminder holds a Montessori teaching qualification Level Four. She implements an approach in line with the Montessori philosophy.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall, children make excellent progress across all areas of the EYFS because the childminder has developed highly effective practices and procedures for planning, assessing and promoting their learning. She offers a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment and works closely with the children to ensure that all interaction encourages and develop their independence, confidence and self-esteem. Excellent and effective partnerships with parents contribute significantly to ensuring that the individual needs and uniqueness of each child is fully met. There are clear self-evaluation and ongoing monitoring systems in place covering most areas of her work which ensures that she has a good overview of her strengths and action plans are in place for continued improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop further the risk assessment process to include each outing.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's individual development is promoted because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of child development and the Montessori philosophy. She has an outstanding attitude to training and development which has led to a rich and varied educational experience for the children. There are comprehensive procedures in place to monitor the children's progress. For example, clear and concise observations are carried out daily with photographs of the children's achievements. Clear children's profiles identify the children's next steps and all are used to inform the individual planning for each child across all areas of learning. Planning is flexible following the children's particular interests and all learning is extended sensitively to their own pace and ability. The dedication to maintaining positive partnerships with parents and other settings providing EYFS mean that children's care is consistent and they are offered highly appropriate support to enable them to make excellent progress. For example, parents are involved in the initial assessment and routinely informed of the next areas to be encouraged at home thus fully supporting the child's learning.

The inspirational environment and excellent resources are very well organised to ensure that all children are able to self-select materials and initiate their own learning. The playrooms offer a broad range of activities which covers a multitude of opportunities for all ages and abilities. Supportive encouragement to learn through their own experiences and exploration is highly featured which makes sure all children are engaged and fascinated by their play. The childminder's genuine aim to provide high quality care means that she continuously evaluates her practice. This is rigorous, includes parents and staff comments and covers all areas of the premises and learning. Detailed action plan show what action needs to be taken and how this will be achieved leading to improvements for all children. Comprehensive policies and procedures are used very effectively to promote the welfare of children attending. Children are cared for in a very safe, secure environment and their welfare is consistently promoted because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of this area. The home is checked daily, weekly and a comprehensive risk assessment for the home is undertaken and annually reviewed. However, whilst there is a clear and concise outing procedure in place, visits are not always routinely risk assessed.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children are consistently offered highly appropriate experiences that support them in making excellent progress in all areas of learning. Their individuality and unique styles of learning are valued and the exceptionally child-led planning methods ensure that their interests and knowledge are continually being extended. Activities and planning are clearly linked to their starting points, observations and assessments, enabling the childminder and her assistants to build on what children know and plan for their continued development. The imaginative informal planning ensures that children enjoy stimulating activities. Children are encouraged to explore the natural environment through activities such as collecting leaves, planting flowers, watering their vegetable plot gaining an appreciation of healthy

eating and growth as they investigate the roots and understand the reason for watering them. They show fascination as they look closely at mini-beasts and pets enjoying mixing the food and feeding the guinea pigs or discussing why the spider is not moving, gently replacing them into the soil. The bright and stimulating play rooms are decorated with their home made Christmas decorations and there is sufficient space to accommodate an impromptu dance session to ballet music using coloured scarves. Children are positively encouraged to be active in their learning, to reason and to work together. For example, children measure out the correct ingredients when cooking, set up the correct number of tables needed for a large group and count how many bricks they have constructed knowing the size they need to complete the tower. They recognise their names and those of their friends, seeing the connection between the same first letters. They love books and discuss subjects linked to them such as pirates and what happens if someone has an allergy.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's outstanding attitude to free-flow opportunities which enable them to move independently from the playroom to the garden. The children learn about the importance of the correct clothing for all weathers and how to negotiate and balance on slides, jump into hoops and throw and catch balls. Children's learning is further extended by visits to the library, post office, park and nature rambles. Their enthusiasm and natural curiosity is nurtured by introducing them to sensory experiences. For example, children enjoy making music with instruments or looking through the different coloured scarves to see the world in various colours. The childminder actively promotes children's independence and their personal sense of responsibility. For example, they routinely help pack away, vacuuming up the rice from the floor, put their boots on or packing away their lunch plates.

Children thrive in a secure environment. They take part in routines that promote their safety on a regular basis such as fire evacuation and road safety. They wear high-visibility waistcoats and practise road safety recognising the importance of safety in the community. Children are aware of hygiene routines because they are positively supported with photographs reminding them about washing hands and using a mirror after lunch time to wipe their mouth clean. The childminder has received the Healthy Eating award and promotes this through advising parents on items suitable for the lunch boxes and discussion with the children to develop their knowledge of nutrition and health.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
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](http://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.