

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	07/12/2010
Inspector	Susan Ennis
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 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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 1989. She lives with her three adult children in Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There is level access to the premises. The family has tropical fish in a tank.

The childminder provides care on each weekday term-time and during school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range and is currently minding three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently three children on roll in this age group. Children on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register share the same facilities as those on the Early Years Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder offers a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which all children thrive and where their development is consistently promoted. Her flexible planning ensures that the children's interests are followed and that they enjoy their time with her. The childminder builds trusting relationships with parents, often caring for the children from a very young age together with their brothers and sisters. Through monitoring her practice the childminder is able to make effective changes to improve the daily care and experiences for the children. She demonstrates a high commitment to her childminding and is enthusiastic about making and sustaining improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of planning to demonstrate how children's developmental next steps are incorporated into it
- update the record of risk assessment to include an assessment for each specific outing and trip
- develop further the use of reflective practice to further highlight your strengths and areas for improvement

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding policies and procedures ensure that children are well protected. For example, the childminder has a comprehensive knowledge of child protection as she regularly attends additional training to update her knowledge. She ensures that anyone coming into contact with the children is suitable to do so and ensures that she knows who is parentally responsible for them all. She uses clear and practical procedures such as daily safety checks and robust risk assessments for monitoring the environment. This means that hazards are minimised and that children can move around freely and with confidence. The childminder also uses well thought out procedures for taking the children out and about. She carries a card with her containing all the children's emergency contact numbers and discusses children's personal safety with them before leaving the house. However, as not all trips and outings are fully risk assessed, children's welfare is potentially affected.

The childminder demonstrates a genuine enjoyment for her work and regularly attends training to update her knowledge and the outcomes for children. She reacts positively to the inspection process and regularly seeks the views of others, including the children. When asked if they like the rules in place, they state that they do as they make them feel safe. They then write that 'The childminder is the best childminder anyone could ever ask for and she is also really fun.' The childminder monitors the environment and makes changes where applicable. For example, she has recently altered her kitchen and dining room into one room so that the children can be more effectively supervised. A conservatory is also in the process of being built to enable her to provide the children with a dedicated play space. However, the childminder has not completed the self evaluation form, meaning that her strengths and potential areas for improvement are not easily identifiable.

The childminder has a good understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, enabling her to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and families. She works closely with the parents to ensure that she understands each child's background, needs and beliefs. She helps children effectively learn about the world around them through use of a range of activities and resources. For example, children very much enjoy making Hannukah candles from cardboard tubes and tell their parents all about them when they see them later in the day.

Children's individual development is well promoted because the childminder has effective procedures in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. The wide range of available resources is well used and the inclusive, child-friendly environment is conducive to children's learning. Low-level storage enables the children to see and freely choose what they want to play with and clear space enables them to sit comfortably whilst they do. The childminder also rotates the resources to provide added stimulation and interest.

A close and trusting partnership with parents ensures that all relevant information is shared and a consistent approach given. Organised documentation ensures that

parents are fully informed about the childminder's policies and procedures detailing her working ethos and good practice. Daily interaction and the use of a home link book ensures that parents are fully involved in their child's day. Each child also has an individual photo album which they enjoy sharing with their parents. The childminder builds effective relationships with the other settings attended by the children. For example, when they are learning to write, the childminder ensures that she is aware of the system used in school to teach children their phonic sounds. She has also made contact with the local pre-school in readiness for one child starting after Christmas, to ensure consistency and continuity of care.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are consistently offered a wide range of opportunities that support them in making good progress across the areas of learning and development. The childminder's flexible planning ensures that children's likes, dislikes and interests are taken into account. For example, when children show an interest in snails the childminder extends their knowledge of the natural world by encouraging them to look for the creatures in the garden. When children decide that they want to turn a cardboard box into a boat, the childminder supports them by following their instructions. For example they want a door cut in the side and seats placed in the box to sit on. The childminder then extends their imaginative play by encouraging them to pretend to steer the boat to where they want to go. The childminder has developed effective procedures for observing and assessing the children's progress. Each has a learning journal which contains examples of their work and photographs demonstrating their progress towards the early learning goals and their next steps. For example, when children have mastered putting the shapes into the shape sorter with the childminder turning the container, the next step is to encourage them to find the correct hole themselves. However, as the planning does not demonstrate children's next steps, it is currently difficult to see how they are incorporated. Therefore children's development is not optimally promoted.

The childminder uses her good knowledge of child development to ensure that all are involved and to draw the learning from day to day activities. For example, children's independence is developed as they help the childminder set the table for lunch by getting out their own place mats. They then extend their language skills by talking about the train figures on the mat, naming each one in turn. When children notice the builders out in the garden, they decide to use their own construction skills to build models of their own. They enthusiastically show the childminder the rocket they have made and are praised for their efforts. Younger children notice a robin in the garden. The childminder asks what the children think the robin would like to eat. The children reply 'Worms', 'disgusting' and show their distaste for this through their facial expression.

Children's emotional development is very well promoted. They develop secure and trusting relationships with the childminder and their friends. They demonstrate this by spontaneously giving the childminder a big hug. The childminder acts as a very positive role model and assists the children in learning acceptable behaviour in an

age appropriate manner. For example, when encouraging the children to pack away the toys, they are thanked for their help and sensitively asked to be gentle so that the toys do not break as they are dropped. The childminder also encourages them to think of others and share the resources. When younger children become frustrated with this, they are reminded that shouting will not get them what they want and are distracted until it is their turn with the toy.

Children's health and hygiene is actively promoted as the childminder takes effective steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy eating. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and let the childminder know when they need a tissue. They increase their knowledge of different foods by making a place mat containing pictures of both healthy and not so healthy foods and by growing strawberries in the garden. They are also learning about their own safety and that of others. Whilst discussing the emergency fire drill older children think of ways that they could help the childminder by, for example, holding the younger children's hands. They also learn about the boundaries in the house to keep them safe. For example, younger children are reminded to roll the ball inside rather than throwing it with a discussion about why this is necessary.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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