

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/01/2011
Inspector	Jane Mount
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 1993. She lives with her partner and adult son and the property is in Watford, Hertfordshire. It is situated close to shops, parks and schools. All areas of the premises are included in the registration, although the ground floor is mainly used for childminding purposes. Toilet facilities are situated on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The registration is for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time with no more than three children in the early years age group. The childminder is currently caring for four children in the early years age range and one child who is over eight years of age.

Overnight care is not included in the registration. The family have a dog and a cat as pets.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Positive relationships between the childminder and parents ensures children's individual needs are met. An inclusive and welcoming environment is provided and children are happy and secure in the childminder's care. Children are making good progress in their learning as activities and play experiences are tailored to their individual developmental needs. The childminder has effective systems in place to ensure children are safeguarded and their welfare is protected. Some processes for monitoring the quality of the provision are in place and a system, such as self-evaluation, to ensure continued improvement is about to be implemented.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement a quality improvement system, such as self-evaluation, to more closely monitor and extend effective practice to ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are secure and children's welfare is protected. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection as she has previously attended a safeguarding children course and is about to update her knowledge through attending further training. She has a safeguarding policy in place and a comprehensive range of safeguarding publications and guidance

documents. The childminder ensures all household members have had relevant background checks completed. Positive steps are taken to keep children safe, such as using safety gates to prevent children accessing some areas and she ensures they are closely supervised at all times. Written risk assessments and on-going visual assessments ensure the environment, both within the childminder's home and when out, remains safe and children are protected.

The childminder has worked hard to develop a secure knowledge of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is reflected in her practice. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to promote children's well being. Documentation is overall well-organised and the childminder understands the importance of confidentiality and takes appropriate steps to protect children. She has many years experience as a childminder and is aware of the need to ensure she keeps up-to-date with current childcare practice. She achieves this through networking with other childminders and through reading and research.

The childminder has attended some training and has identified further training she would like to complete. She is aware of her key strengths and the areas she wishes to develop further and she undertakes some monitoring to ensure the quality of the provision is good. Feedback is sought from parents and the childminder reviews and updates all documentation on a regular basis. A system of self-evaluation to more closely monitor her practice to ensure continued improvement is about to be introduced.

Children's care and learning are positively supported. The childminder ensures children's individual needs are met through organising her time and resources effectively. Resources are accessible and developmentally appropriate and the daily routine is planned to ensure all children are fully included. The childminder values and appreciates the children and families in her care and takes great care to find out about and to meet children's specific needs. She respects cultural and religious backgrounds and promotes and encourages the use of children's home languages while ensuring they have regular opportunities to develop their English. Useful information is gathered from parents at the initial visit and used by the childminder to plan and provide care and learning that meets each child's needs.

Effective settling-in procedures ensure children settle well and quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. Children benefit from the two-way sharing of information between the childminder and parents with information verbally exchanged and through the use of daily report sheets. The childminder has a welcome folder with the setting's policies and procedures which is made available to new and prospective parents. Notice boards are also used to share information with parents. The childminder shows a positive attitude and awareness to liaising with other early years settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to promote the integration of care and education and to ensure children are fully supported.

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

Children are making good progress in their learning and development. The childminder effectively uses the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan a varied range of activities and play experiences for children. Planning is flexible with activities adapted to cater for individual children's needs and interests. Systems for observing and assessing children show children's progress and achievements over time. Children experience a varied range of play experiences which cover the six areas of learning. They participate in a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated play with the indoor and outdoor environments used to fully promote their play and learning. Regular outings and visits to toddlers groups further promotes children's learning and develops their social skills.

Children's independence is encouraged with the environment organised with resources easily accessible to children. They are able to express themselves creatively and participate in regular art and craft activities. Children enjoy making butterflies from cardboard tubes or rockets using foil or hand and foot painting. Their counting skills are promoted, such as when they sing songs that incorporate numbers. Children enjoy singing the current bun song and use cardboard current buns they have made to show how many have been 'eaten' and how many are left in the shop. Children participate in activities and games which incorporate the use of colours and shapes, such as playing with jigsaws or building with bricks. Their communication skills are effectively supported by the childminder as she asks open ended questions to develop children's language through their play.

Regular story times also support children's early communication skills and children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books and discussing the pictures with the childminder. They learn about the wider world and a range of resources and activities are available to ensure their awareness of diversity is promoted. Children are encouraged to talk about travelling on aeroplanes when going on holiday and about different foods from around the world. They have opportunities to learn about the local community and participate in regular walks and outings.

The childminder implements effective strategies to protect children's health with good hygiene practices in place to ensure the risk of cross infection is minimised. Children are learning how to keep themselves healthy with support and guidance from the childminder. They know they must wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. They keenly wash their hands with soap and water before using their own colour coded towel for hand drying. Children participate in a varied range of activities which contributes to their good health and physical fitness. They enjoy music and movement sessions, go for regular walks, play in the garden and visit a variety of children's parks where they particularly enjoy developing their climbing skills.

Children are provided with a nutritious, balanced diet with their individual dietary needs catered for appropriately. The childminder has a two week menu which reflects a healthy, balanced diet and this is shared with parents. Children are beginning to learn about the benefits of eating a healthy diet, such as knowing

fruit and vegetables are good for their body. They are praised when they try a new fruit or vegetable and have enjoyed planting and growing vegetables, such as sweetcorn and tomatoes.

Children's safety is protected and they are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. When out walking they discuss road safety and how to stay safe when crossing roads. At the childminder's home they know they mustn't run when inside in case they fall and hurt themselves. They know it is safer to come down the stairs on their bottoms. Children behave well. Reward certificates are used to acknowledge positive behaviour which children enjoy receiving and regular praise and encouragement from the childminder develops children's self-esteem. Children are supported effectively by the childminder and are encouraged to share and to take turns. Positive relationships between the childminder and children enable children to feel settled in the childminder's care and consequently, children feel secure in their surroundings and are confident in their play.

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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