

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	147974
Inspection date	15/03/2011
Inspector	Christine Bonnett

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 was registered in 1996. She lives with her husband, adult child and child of 15 years in Harrow Weald, in the London borough of Harrow. The ground floor of the house is mainly used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. She is currently minding two children in this age group. She is registered on the Early Years Register, and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a pet cat.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children generally make excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development because this supportive and skilled childminder understands how children learn and has an in-depth understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Her extremely strong relationship with parents ensures she is aware of each child's individual needs, and how to meet them effectively. The childminder is fully committed to the continuous development of her practice for the benefit of the children and has highly effective systems in place to accurately reflect upon her work.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide garden equipment and apparatus that offers physical challenge to older and more confident children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder fully understands her responsibility towards safeguarding the well-being of all the children, and does so effectively. All adults living in the home have undergone appropriate vetting procedures to assess their suitability to be in the proximity of the children. The childminder has a thorough knowledge of the indicators of child abuse, and of her local authority procedures to follow to report concerns. She ensures that her knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues is kept up-to-date by attending refresher courses every three years. The

childminder further supports the safety of children by conducting risk assessments on her home and garden. These highlight potential hazards and how they are minimised. Risk assessments are also in place for each type of outing the children enjoy; these include the routine walk to school and the shops. The childminder's excellent organisational skills mean that all the documents, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to ensure the children's needs are met, are maintained. In addition, children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are reminded how to handle scissors with care, learn how to cross roads safely and participate in regular fire drills.

Children make good use of the designated playroom. It is clean and made welcoming for children by having alphabet and colour recognition posters on the wall, as well photographs of the current children, and those who have left the childminder's care. Consequently, it is highly conducive environment for children's learning. Furniture, equipment and resources are of high quality. They are also clean and well maintained to support the sustainability of the setting. Children's independence is fostered as they confidently select play materials of their choice from drawer units. They become familiar with where particular items are stored and understand that they are available for them to use at all times. The childminder uses her time and resources highly effectively to provide children with an extensive range of stimulating and fun learning experiences. There is an extremely good balance of adult led and free play. This contributes positively to children's learning and helps them to thrive.

The childminder has a highly positive attitude towards the continual development of her practice. She considers it to be very important to keep up-to-date with current good practice by attending training courses and workshops as it benefits the children as well as her own professional development. The childminder reflects on her practice and found the Ofsted self-evaluation form an extremely useful tool to assist her in identifying areas of strength and those to enhance. The completed form produced an accurate reflection of her practice. The childminder recognised that she had a gap in her childcare knowledge in relation to caring for children requiring additional support. As a result of this, she is currently attending a 'Caring for children with disabilities' course. She hopes to be able to apply her new-found skills to support children in her care in the future. Since the last inspection, the childminder has bought the storage drawers for the playroom in order to enable the children to self-select resources. Parent questionnaires are used to obtain the views of the parents. All comments are welcomed and viewed positively. The childminder's plans for the future include enhancing the range of garden equipment to suit the needs of the older children.

Children benefit significantly from the excellent working relationship between the childminder and the parents. A wealth of relevant information is gained from them about their child before the arrangement begins. This ensures that the childminder is fully aware of the background and needs of each child, and that the care she provides is consistent and appropriate. The childminder also ensures that she keeps parents well-informed about how their child has spent the day through daily verbal discussions. Parents are provided with excellent quality information about the childminder's provision. For example, the childminder has developed a range of comprehensive written policies and procedures to underpin her practice. They also

have the opportunity to support their child's learning at home by having regular access to their progress files. The childminder has links with the nursery the children attend to share information about their welfare and learning. She also liaises with the school in relation to obtaining additional support for children, if needed.

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

The childminder's excellent knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to implement them effectively in her work ensures that every child makes highly effective progress in their learning and development. Children thrive and become confident and competent learners as they benefit enormously from the enthusiasm of the childminder and the friendly and warm environment she creates for them. Each child is viewed as a unique individual, and effective observations and assessments of their achievements are conducted in order to identify their specific learning priorities. Themes are planned, and activities incorporating each of the six areas of learning are devised to support them. The theme entitled 'people who help us' included the children dressing up as Fireman Sam and watching the video. The childminder also conducted a fire drill during that week to link in with the theme. Another theme the children enjoyed was 'Transport', which included a visit to the local bus garage. This activity helped children learn about the local community.

Children enjoy selecting books for pleasure and settling down with the childminder for a story. A particular favourite is 'Telling the time with Pooh'. The childminder is skilled at asking children questions to make children think and to develop their vocabulary. They also develop pre-writing skills as they draw and paint. Problem solving and numeracy is very well supported throughout the day as it is incorporated into the routine, such as counting the pencils or the cars on the road. Children relax and become absorbed in their play as they make up their own imaginative games. They thoroughly enjoy playing with dolls, naming and feeding them, and pushing them in the buggy. Children learn the skills they will need in the future to operate information and communication technology as they have access to a laptop. This has games to further support numeracy. Learning these skills in a fun and enjoyable way contributes greatly to ensuring children's economic well-being in the future.

Children are offered excellent opportunities to learn the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. They engage in a wide range of physical activities, such as walking to the local shops and running around in Bushy Park. While at the park they have fun taking photographs of the birds. The back garden is also available for fresh air and exercise, although it lacks equipment to offer challenge to older and more confident children. The childminder ensures children enjoy a healthy and nutritious diet that takes account of their individual needs. Parents supply their child's main meals while the childminder ensure that she provides cereal and milk for breakfast and a variety of fresh fruit at snack time. She also ensures that children have plenty to drink during the day to prevent dehydration. Project work

is done with the children focussing on 'good' and 'bad' food. Children cut out pictures to illustrate the good and bad and make a poster for the wall. They talk about which foods are good for your teeth, and what to avoid. These activities contribute significantly to children's understanding of how to maintain good health. Older children confidently manage their own personal hygiene. They clearly explain why they have to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day. They also enjoy having their own personal towel with their name tag attached in the cloakroom. In addition, children learn to cover their mouths when they cough to prevent the risk of cross infection. The childminder also has a policy that excludes children from her care when they are ill or infections to further promote the good health of children.

The childminder supports children to learn about diversity within society, and to value and respect their peers. She finds out about the cultural and religious backgrounds of the children and ensures that their festivals are acknowledged. Recently, she learned about the traditional festivals enjoyed by those of the Buddhist faith in order to support the needs of a child in her care. The caring and nurturing environment created by the childminder enables the children to flourish. They understand what is expected of them because there are rules in the home that are consistently applied. These include being kind to each other, sharing and taking turns. They are also encouraged to develop good manners and receive plenty of praise for achievement. Consequently, they develop a sense of security and good self esteem. The children demonstrate that they feel safe with the childminder as they thoroughly enjoy snuggling up to her for a cuddle and confidently express their needs, such as needing to use the cloakroom.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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