

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/05/2010
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen Talbot
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 was registered in March 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged ten and 15 years in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding with selected areas on the first floor at the discretion of the childminder. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play set across two separate levels. The childminder has a cat and two rabbits. Access to the childminder's home is via slope and single step. The rear garden is set on two levels divided by a fence with a gate and several steps.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than four of which may be in the early years age range for specified days and times as stated on the condition of registration. There are currently five children attending part-time hours, four of whom are within the early years age range.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected by the childminder because she develops a clear knowledge of each child's care needs and development. She forms an extremely positive relationship with parents and carers adapting to changing care needs during entry into other settings or when altering care hours, understanding their home life and sharing welfare care each day with them. Attention to these areas of care ensures that children's needs are met and that activities planned promote good progress overall. Partnerships with other agencies and beginning to be developed. The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's welfare through established routines for health, minimising risks and clear safeguarding awareness. She is aware of self-development and is beginning to implement new methods to promote outcomes for children but is yet to fully develop a system for self-evaluation that will ensure further development and improved outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the use of information gathered about children's learning to enhance their good progress towards the early learning goals with particular reference to identifying starting points and ongoing parental input, and using the identified next steps to inform the planned learning
- develop links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and coherence to support outcomes

- for children
- use self-evaluation and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing internal review.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is well promoted because the childminder has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a clear understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding periodically reviewing all documentation for referral procedures. The childminder ensures that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Broad risk assessments for the home and outings are undertaken to minimise risks for children. Children take part in activities designed to increase their awareness of personal safety such as emergency evacuation inside the home and road safety in the community each day. Very young children receive constant reminders to take care when climbing and moving around the home and garden enabling them to learn through good example. Children explore the home with close supervision forming very good relationships and developing a sense of security within the home. They are helped to feel a sense of belonging when they use attractive name cards on which are their photographs and drawings they have made for storing coats and belongings. Procedures for illness and accidents are well planned.

The childminder offers an inclusive service for all children in her care and ensures that she understands each child's background, culture, beliefs and individual need in order to tackle discrimination. She is aware of children's individual learning styles and needs, and uses this in her planning. For instance, when children attend infrequently she is aware of their need for increased support, and for those who are becoming increasingly independent she offers opportunities for self-help skills to develop. Activities are planned to share children's family life and cultures with others. For example, children explore Easter celebrations as well as the Hindu culture making links to other faiths and celebrations. They share 'Canadian' Day learning about each other's special days and learn some of the Welsh language to explore family background. The childminder has experience of care for children with special educational needs and disabilities and works closely to adapt play and the home to ensure that every child may participate within all activities. The childminder has a positive attitude towards working with other agencies but has not yet developed those working partnerships to ensure consistency and cohesion in the approach towards learning for children. The relationship with parents is excellent and supportive for children. Some feedback comments include, '(the childminder is) kind, considerate, caring and professional', 'highly reliable - provides a report every day which is extremely useful', and that, 'she has a special gift of helping children to develop their social skills'. 'She treats them all equally but still embraces and develops their unique individuality'. The childminder demonstrates enthusiasm for her work and is motivated to continue making changes that improve outcomes for children. Examples of this are the development records and folders that are shared with parents. She has attended all required training and is open to continued learning in the future. Self-evaluation processes have been considered but do not yet form the basis of internal review to focus

strengths or areas for development. Children achieve and make good progress in their learning overall because resources are well used offering children variety and stimulation across a broad spectrum of learning. Local community resources such as toddler groups and childminding groups provide an extended range of opportunities.

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

Children are confident and enjoy their time spent with the childminder. They make good progress in their development because the childminder is effective in supporting their learning through play based on their interests and some outlined topic work. Emphasis is given to establishing their personal, social and emotional development to give them a base from which to develop. This is shown as children respond positively to the childminder, repeating actions that result in praise, making choices between activities, and eagerly participating with all activities planned at their own level. Children learn from each other, the childminder reminds the oldest children that the youngest children are watching and think they are very clever! The eldest children, present all day, understand the physical care needs of younger children showing that they are becoming socially aware. Detailed learning and development files are filled with spontaneous observations, links to the areas of learning, photographs, next steps and progression charts. This is evidence that the childminder uses observation and assessment to support every child. However, there is not a clear system to show the baseline assessment involving parents nor a system to show ongoing parental input, nor are the next steps seen to feed the planning. This means there is potential for learning opportunities to be missed.

Children are actively involved in their learning. Young children make choices between play with early technology and battery operated toys, role-play using houses and equipment for shopping, books and reading, as well as an abundance of tactile and colourful toys to push, pull and control. They investigate things repeatedly such as pushing cars and trucks along the floor, pressing knobs and buttons and finding out that they can make musical toys operate. Children are keen to explore the play and link it with their own experiences reinforcing what they see and hear around them. For example, when playing with the role-play houses children wait for the childminder to name each room as they point to it, linking it to what takes place within that room such as sleeping, eating or using the bathroom. This is then linked with their own stage of toilet training helping them to understand more about their world. Children enjoy groups in the local community where they socialise and explore further play. They thoroughly enjoy the music and singing that takes place and confidently sing familiar songs to new adults in the home. Children explore craft and creative works such as felt pens (a satisfactory instant result), chalks on black paper, and making snakes from cutting spirals after colouring them. The youngest children take part in all activities beginning to make marks, exploring colour and sitting at the table with the group. Each child is supported at their own level, older children are helped to cut the spirals after completion to make their snakes adding eyes and a hook to hang them in the wind. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe and secure

in the home. Familiar routines for health are being established with the introduction of hand washing for children throughout the day. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks together learning about the need for healthy foods to promote well-being and have ample opportunities to explore large physical movement to promote physical health. They use the garden, set on two levels, as well as local parks each day to experiment with climbing and negotiating obstacles. They explore some gardening, planting cress and flowers as well as digging in the garden. Recycling is undertaken with children sorting items for the separate bins and beginning to explore the need to care for the environment. Positive relationships with parents help to establish expected levels of behaviours and help children to feel secure and learn about how their behaviour affects others around them. They are establishing skills for the future to assist in their learning and development.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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