

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/12/2009
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in May 2000. She lives with her partner and two children aged seven and 11 years in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The ground floor of the home is used for childminding with identified bedrooms on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has tortoises and guinea pigs.

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 three of which may be in the early years age range. There are currently four children attending part-time hours, two of whom are within the early years age range. The childminder takes children to and collects from other settings such as nurseries, pre-schools or schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected by the childminder who has a good knowledge of each child's needs and interest. She develops a positive relationship with parents and carers seeking and taking account of their views providing flexible care that adapts to changing care hours, entry into school and extra curricular activities attended. This helps to ensure that children's needs are met and that activities planned promote good progress in their learning. Partnerships with other agencies promote consistency of care. The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's welfare through established routines for health, minimising risk and clear safeguarding awareness. She has an effective approach for self-evaluation, continuing to review her work and implement improved systems maintaining a good basis for 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:

- update the record of risk assessments to include any assessments of risks for outings and trips
- identify an initial starting point for children's learning that involves parental input and use the assessments made to show progression.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted because the childminder has a firm understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). She has an understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding and wellbeing maintaining practical

procedures which are fully shared with parents. The childminder ensures that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Procedures for illness and medical assistance are well-planned. For example, the childminder uses head injury forms where needed to alert parents to bumps and accidents, retains emergency cards holding all details of herself and children when away from the home, and ensures that she implements the international contact for emergencies system (ICE) in the telephone. Clear risk assessments are completed but a full record for all types of outings undertaken is not currently maintained. This means there is potential for children's safety to be compromised. Children are given ongoing reminders and explanations to enable them to build up an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For instance, they discuss road safety when walking in the community.

The childminder seeks to offer an inclusive service to all children in her care and ensures that she understands each child's background, culture and beliefs. She uses this knowledge when she encourages children to recognise differences, offering them information about other ways of life and encouraging them to respect diversity. On occasion, and in full agreement with parents, they attend services such as Mass, they explore non-verbal communication using books, and discuss architecture of different places of worship in the community. This enables children to ask questions and broaden their understanding of others around them. The childminder is aware of children's individual learning styles and uses this in her planning thereby narrowing the achievement gap. For example, she takes note of children who learn in an active manner moving from one activity to the next quite quickly and those who are able to maintain longer concentration, and pays attention to developing the language of other children ensuring that she speaks with them constantly giving them time to listen and repeat words to develop their own communication. The childminder works closely with other settings where children attend ensuring that she seeks information about activities in order to provide consistent, complementary care. The relationship with parents is good enabling them to exchange information each day contributing to improvements in children's wellbeing. Parents comment that they are 'pleased with the amount of activities their children enjoy' and with the, 'love, care and attention they are given'. However, they are yet to be fully involved in the process of planned learning through an established baseline assessment on ongoing system to contribute to the learning programme.

The childminder demonstrates enthusiasm for her work and is motivated to continue making changes that improve outcomes for children. She uses self-evaluation and has a clear picture of her strengths and areas for development. Recent training and improvements focus on the learning and development programme through courses such as 'Linking sounds and letters', 'An introduction to EYFS', and 'the six areas of learning'. Children make good progress in their learning and achieve well because the childminder makes good use of resources. Her home is welcoming and conducive to learning with young children able to self-initiate learning and access materials.

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

Children are confident and enjoy their time spent in the childminder's care. They make good progress in their learning because the childminder has a secure knowledge of the EYFS. She naturally challenges children as they play speaking to them about size, shape, colour and number, supporting their emergent language by listening closely and allowing them time to repeat words, praising them to develop self-esteem. She observes children as they play making observations which are linked to the areas of learning within EYFS. Individual files show the range of activities undertaken and identified next steps but they do not show that they are soundly based on an initial starting point nor do they show a clear record of progress without reading through them.

The childminder is mindful of her role in ensuring safety and fostering personal hygiene and health. For instance, they take part in emergency evacuation regularly and practise road safety each day. Children know that they use individual towels to promote hygiene with very young children learning to hold out each hand in turn to be dried before helping to replace their towel. Posters encouraging hand-washing help reinforce good practice. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. On occasion, stickers for positive behaviour reinforces children's understanding of their own behaviour. They are confident, and therefore actively involved in their learning. Children show trusting, secure relationships with the childminder seeking attention and involving her in their role play as they offer foods they are 'cooking' or blowing on the foods as she tells them they are 'hot'. Children develop good awareness of their physical skills and are active each day walking to and from schools, using local parks or making obstacle courses in the garden. They have opportunities to design the courses and solve problems working out which items to go underneath, which to go over and how they will balance.

Children's creativity is promoted because the childminder helps each child to achieve at their own rate. Sensory play for the youngest children such as shaving foam play, or jelly with plastic animals buried inside helps them to explore tactile experiences and maintain concentration. Music is enjoyed each day with attendance at a music group in the community each week further stimulating music and singing. Early opportunities to explore how things work develop children's interest in mechanical objects and technology. This varies from using mechanical fairground toys and trains that are wound up together with switches on trucks and cars to operate wheels and make noises, to exploring binoculars when children animatedly tell the childminder about things being bigger or smaller depending which end you look through. Children have use of the computer and internet, with supervision, to explore new subjects and seek information when asking questions. This helps them to utilise current and updated information sources preparing them for school and later life.

Children explore sustainability through several avenues with the childminder. They complete works on recycling and have visited the recycling centre learning about plastic and glass and its future uses. They discuss the use of paper learning to make good use of the paper used thinking about the effects on trees and

understand that they should take shopping bags with them rather than using new plastic carrier bags each trip. Children extend this work to learning about feeding, for example, uneaten apple cores to the pets or adding it to the recycle bins. They are being supported, by the childminder, to learn about the world in which they live and think about the future.

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	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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