

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	219807
Inspection date	07/07/2011
Inspector	Lynne 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 1990. She lives with her husband in Dunstable, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

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 six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently seven children attending on a part-time basis, five of whom are within the early years age range.

The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's individuality is fully respected by the childminder because she develops a comprehensive knowledge of children's needs and interests. She forms a very good relationship with parents and carers, taking full account of their views. Partnerships with other agencies continue to develop. The childminder creates a highly welcoming environment, using significantly effective safeguarding procedures and thorough risk assessment to promote children's welfare. She shows animated drive and commitment, providing an excellent basis for continued improvement, while the process for self-evaluation is continuing to develop.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhancing further the assessment procedures that are in place to identify an initial starting point for children and using the assessments made to show progression
- developing further the links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and coherence to support outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is very well promoted because the childminder has a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a comprehensive understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. The childminder ensures that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Thorough risk assessments are completed for both the home and all outings undertaken. Daily risk assessments for the home are supported by observation sheets to ensure that the ongoing monitoring of measures improves safety for children. Children participate in very regular and inventive role play evacuation routines and road safety awareness designed to increase their knowledge of personal safety. Procedures for illness and medical assistance are extremely well planned.

The childminder offers an inclusive service to children in her care and ensures that she works with parents to understand each child as an individual. She is aware of each child's learning style or stage and uses this when organising the day, thereby ensuring that every child achieves. For example, separate practical equipment allows children of different ages to participate at the same activity, such as malleable dough. She also ensures that there is time and space to allow more intricate construction or creative works to be completed when babies are asleep or have left for the day. In this way free choices are offered while recognising and valuing the children as unique. There is a very good settling-in period offered and frequent sharing of information with parents. The relationship is very well developed. Parents complete guidance for the childminder with regard to welfare issues to enable her to plan to meet individual needs. The childminder provides daily diaries for parents that detail the main activities that have taken place and associated areas of learning, as well as physical care needs. Where needed the childminder assists with weaning and adheres to all specific dietary needs. Parents are invited to review children's development files and discuss the personalised learning periodically. Parents comment that children love being with the childminder and always return extremely happy after a day spent with her. They report that children 'always get plenty of fresh air and exercise as they are taken out for the day together where they have a lot of fun come rain or shine'. This fully supports their developing health. Parents state that they are extremely grateful to the childminder for her invaluable contribution to their child's development. The childminder has a positive attitude towards working with other settings that provide care for children in the early years stage. She is building methods that will ensure consistency and coherence in the learning process for children, but these are not yet fully established. The childminder is not caring for any children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, she has an excellent understanding of the value of working with other professionals when the need arises to ensure that she is meeting children's particular needs.

The childminder demonstrates an animated enthusiasm for her work and is highly motivated to continue making changes that improve outcomes for children. She continues to seek training to enhance the care given and a portfolio of certificates shows attendance at 40 courses since registration. Since 2010, examples include

nutrition and oral health, speech and language, observation and planning, Makaton signing and safeguarding children. Self-evaluation processes are well established and continue to develop. Children make excellent progress in their learning because the childminder makes the optimum use of resources and adapts extremely well to spontaneous learning situations. The environment is vibrant and exceptionally stimulating, with children of all ages self-initiating learning, accessing materials and making considered choices regarding activities.

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

Children are very content and thoroughly enjoy their time spent with the childminder. They make rapid progress overall because the childminder follows children's interests and supports their needs well. She observes children as they play and shares this with parents using daily diaries that note key activities, new achievements and physical care. The childminder uses focused observation to plan on a monthly basis for each child, identifying outcomes to work towards. However, personalised learning is not shown to be built from recorded initial assessment and does not show the tracked progression. This means that potential learning opportunities may fail to be maximised to progress children towards the early learning goals. Children are actively involved in their learning and the childminder is very skilled at following children's interests. For instance, when playing with malleable dough, children develop this game into making cakes with cherries on top. They count with confidence, estimating how many they will make and then producing that number. They extend this into role play with the childminder 'cooking' them in the main oven, from which they later proudly present a plate of cakes to adults present. Every child is able to fully participate as the childminder adapts all play situations to include the very youngest children. Children competently use simple technology, such as mechanical toys, a music player, weighing scales and an electronic light-matching game. They initiate cutting and gluing and correctly name simple shapes from a very early age.

Regular use of community settings and facilities provide a further resource. Children visit large play centres and parks, the zoo, museums and a windmill. The childminder is skilled at extending interests in current activities. For example, children love to bake, and they visit the farm to collect their own eggs and the windmill where they discuss how corn is ground to make the flour they use in bread and cakes. Children display an excellent awareness of social manners, using 'please' and 'thank you' without being prompted. They take personal responsibility for washing their hands and tell the childminder that 'if we don't wash our hands before dinner we will get germs and get a tummy ache'. They show a clear awareness of the link between hygiene and health. Children are responsible for caring for their own wooden house in the garden and learn to take responsibility for belongings. They plant flowers as well as a huge range of vegetables including onions, pumpkins and potatoes. They enjoy visiting a local venue where the gardener welcomes them and encourages the children with their produce, resulting in a project to grow chillies and tomatoes. The childminder is able to foster children's awareness of the link between food and health because she has embarked on a healthy eating award and training scheme.

Children enjoy small world play with railway tracks and playhouses „with which they explore what they have seen around them. Children enjoy reading books and sharing stories both alone and with the childminder. They count confidently and are helped to begin matching numbers to pictures within puzzles, extending their knowledge of number. The childminder shows skill as she incorporates singing and rhymes with stories and helps children to begin identifying words that rhyme. Initial sounds and letters are emphasised to help early reading skills. Children explore linguistic and cultural diversity freely. For instance, children share words in French and Spanish together and have great fun when members of the childminder's family introduce German to them as well. They are fascinated with new experiences, such as Egyptian hieroglyphic script with which they explore mark making. The childminder encourages children to use role play to reinforce learning. For example, when taking part in road safety week they develop their own road crossing patrol equipment. They take this to a safe place where older children help younger children to learn about crossing the road safely. Children are extremely eager to explore each new experience and are responsive and listen to explanations. They have outstanding opportunities to learn the skills that will help them in their future lives within social and learning situations.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	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	2
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	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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