

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	26/01/2011
Inspector	Dianne Andrews
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 1985. She lives with her husband in Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port. The area which is used for childminding is a designated playroom in the childminder's house. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently eight children on roll attending for a variety of sessions. The childminder walks or drives to schools to take and collect children. She attends local childminder groups and takes the children to the local library and other places of interest. The childminder is a member of the National Child Minding Association. She has a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in childcare.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has a comprehensive understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She uses this and her extensive knowledge of each child to ensure that their needs are consistently met and that they are offered a wide range of activities that successfully promote their welfare and learning. The childminder's exceptionally professional approach to her work enables parents to feel confident in her, and excellent procedures support the exchange of relevant information about children and promote the provision of consistent care and support. The childminder diligently reviews her work and has a positive approach to self-evaluation, actively seeking feedback from parents and children. This approach enables her to build a thorough picture of her practice and prioritise improvements, thereby, maintaining a service which is highly responsive to the needs of children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing risk assessments further to cover anything with which a child may come into contact.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and practised effectively to ensure that children are very well protected. The childminder's excellent

knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and her awareness of her role in protecting the children in her care ensures that their welfare is safeguarded. She fully recognises her responsibility to ensure all adults who have access to the children are suitable and have completed appropriate checks. Children's safety is very effectively considered in all areas, although recorded risk assessments do not cover everything with which a child comes into contact. Check lists are completed to help minimise hazards on a daily basis.

The childminder manages daily routines effectively to accommodate the individual needs of the children attending. The environment is utilised to its full potential to provide children with choices about where and with what they wish to play. Children play a dynamic role in their learning. They eagerly develop their play as they spontaneously take their learning outside to the open air environment; they use both areas particularly well to extend activities. Children clearly benefit and thrive as a result of the setting they are in. Furniture, equipment and resources are of high quality and support children's learning and development exceedingly well.

The childminder is exceptionally well organised, very experienced, highly motivated and totally committed to providing a high level of care and education to ensure the best possible outcomes for children. She regularly attends training to update her knowledge and expertise and to enhance her excellent practice. She implements ideas she gains through training to offer the best opportunities for children's development in all areas. For instance, she collated resources and developed her knowledge of information technology systems in order to promote children's experiences in this area.

The childminder treats each child as an individual and has an admirable awareness of issues relating to anti-discriminatory practice. This supports her in providing a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. Her thorough procedures for gathering information about children allow her to gain an excellent understanding of each child's background and needs. This enables her to plan very relevant activities and to ensure that children are always offered superb support. Children feel valued and their self-esteem is promoted because they are encouraged to understand and respect each other and are fully involved in decision making and activity planning; they are consulted as the menu for the week is decided and they help devise the programme of activities based on their interests.

An informative and eye-catching notice board at the entrance to the setting provides parents and visitors with a wealth of information about the provision. The childminder's highly positive relationships with parents supports the exchange of relevant information and means that parents are fully informed of their children's progress and activities. Through written references they make comments, such as 'Through sharing of information we are able to follow our children's developmental progress and ensure we also provide stimulus to follow on from the activities' and 'My children's development is beyond the average for their age, our childminder has produced two children with exceptional knowledge and understanding of the world and also a desire to thrive and learn more.' Consistency of care is further promoted as the childminder has established purposeful working relationships with others providing care for the children. For example, she has clear procedures for exchanging information with the school and pre-school so that she can provide

complementary activities and they can work together to ensure that children are offered consistent support.

The childminder sets high standards for the quality of care she offers. She demonstrates a genuine enjoyment of her work and is highly motivated to further develop her practice and, thereby, improve the outcomes for children. She actively seeks feedback from parents and attends a wide variety of additional training in order to inform the evaluation of her practice. Her rigorous and honest approach and her positive attitude to feedback enable her to identify changes and prioritise areas for improvement. All improvements are directly related to her earnest desire to provide a service which is continuously evolving to meet children's needs and fully promote their development.

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

Children thrive in the highly stimulating environment. They make excellent progress because the childminder has a comprehensive knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and fully understands how children learn through play and exploration. She implements rigorous assessment procedures and uses the information gained from these to ensure that activity planning is well targeted and focused to fully promote children's individual development.

Children play an active part in all aspects of this vibrant setting. They are encouraged to express themselves and their opinions are genuinely valued. The childminder has an excellent awareness of their interests and needs, she includes this information in the planning to ensure that their development is promoted and they benefit from a rich and varied range of experiences. Children play an energetic role in their learning, eagerly voicing their ideas and working together to experiment and solve problems. They make choices about what they want to do next, respond with great enthusiasm to challenges and show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. They play creatively in all areas of the provision. The home corner is adapted to offer facilities that reflect everyday life; they benefit from the use of a range of real, natural and familiar objects, such as having fresh vegetables in the home corner as props in their play. In the exciting outdoor area they hide in the camouflage den or climb over the large wooden ship, which dominates the play area and offers a stimulus for many activities.

Children thoroughly enjoy developing play with disused cardboard boxes and cylindrical containers of varying sizes using mathematical concepts and language in their play. They develop skills for the future as they solve simple problems; as a soft toy becomes lodged in a tube they use their own initiative, negotiate and work together, pulling in opposite directions to set it free. They take part in a range of interesting activities and experiences that help them to value diversity. They use a variety of tools and colourful, textured materials to decorate a dragon face. They decide, by assessing suitable spaces around the room, where to hang their creation, until it is used for a dragon dance to mark the celebration of Chinese New Year. Innovative posters and photographs of people and the countries they live in

are displayed around the setting. These help initiate discussions and encourage children to develop knowledge about how others live and to respect similarities and differences.

The childminder's excellent interaction with children aids the development of their communication skills. They use language confidently and imaginatively, explaining their views and often describing the intricacies of their activities and role play. They respond positively to the childminder's use of a banana as a puppet and listen intently as it explains about the benefits of healthy eating; they answer its questions confidently, demonstrating their awareness that fruit and vegetables help them to grow big and be healthy. They plant and tend seeds and bulbs to grow their own flowers and vegetables in troughs in the garden, using their edible produce at snack and mealtimes, thus encouraging children to try new tastes. Children show a strong sense of security and their behaviours demonstrate that they feel safe. Their independence is promoted very well as they play an active role in the preparation of their snacks, recognising the need to be careful with the knife used to slice the fruit. They learn about the positive benefits of exercise, play actively and learn about the body and how it responds as they feel their heart beat. They are inspired to move with control and coordination, to sing and dance to action videos and to begin to develop an awareness of space.

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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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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