

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	19/01/2012
Inspector	Joanne Williams
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 has been registered since 1988. She lives with her husband on the outskirts of Crewe. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding with access to a bathroom upstairs and a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group. She is also able to provide care to children aged over five to eight years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Most facilities for young children are a short car ride away. The childminder takes children to community groups, play centres and parks. She is also part of the local authority childminder network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care because the childminder knows them well and works closely with their parents and carers. This ensures that children's individual care needs are sensitively met. The childminder has a good understanding of child development and uses this knowledge to plan for individual children. As a result, children are making good progress in most areas of learning and development. Procedures to keep children safe allow her to effectively protect them and written documentation that underpins her practice is generally well-maintained. The childminder regularly evaluates the quality of her provision and is committed to improving and developing her service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that confidential information is stored securely
- improve systems to assess children's learning, so that their progress can be tracked more effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and well protected in the setting because the childminder has a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures and keeps up-to-date with training. Children are kept safe while in the childminder's care because she is vigilant and supervises them well. Effective risk assessments are in place, which cover all areas of the home, both indoors and outdoors, and also assessments for

outings. This means that children are able to move safely and freely around the setting. Children are also further protected because the childminder records important information about accidents, medication and attendance. However, some confidential information is not securely stored. There is a comprehensive set of policies to cover many aspects of the childminder's service. These are shared with parents to ensure they understand her procedures.

The childminder shows dedication and enthusiasm towards her work and children's best interests are at the centre of all that she does. The childminder is knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and uses this to support children in their learning. Children have access to a good range of resources, which are stored at low-level to encourage them to make choices and become independent learners. A key strength is that the childminder adapts these resources to suit their individual interests. For example, children who are interested in mini beasts have access to an 'Explorer's Box' with magnifying glasses and binoculars to take on a bug hunt in the local area. The childminder provides an inclusive environment for the children she cares for which is reflected in her simple, yet well-written, equal opportunities policy. This ensures that all children are valued as individuals and their needs are effectively met.

The childminder has a clear vision for the future and is committed to making ongoing improvements. She uses formal systems of self-evaluation to review her practice and regularly attends training sessions to fill gaps in her knowledge. Since her last inspection, the childminder has significantly improved the learning environment by making resources more accessible, so that children can become independent learners.

Children are content because the childminder works closely with parents and carers to ensure that she is fully aware about their individual needs. Feedback from parents demonstrates that they are well-informed about the provision through effective verbal communication. A comprehensive 'All about me' book is completed by parents prior to children attending the setting, with information, such as, dietary needs, routines, likes and dislikes. As a result, children are effectively supported during the transition and feel settled and secure in the setting. The childminder has established good links with local schools and uses information about what children are learning to inform her planning. For example, children enjoy sharing a story sack about the lifecycle of a caterpillar to support a mini beast topic in nursery. The childminder works in close partnership with other agencies involved with individual children to ensure their needs are effectively met.

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

The children benefit from a warm, homely atmosphere, where they can enjoy a lot of individual attention. This means that each child's care needs are effectively catered for. Children enjoy a varied and interesting range of activities, both in the childminder's home and also in the local community. The childminder provides children with high visibility jackets during outings and regularly involves children in fire drills. As a result, children learn how to respond to emergency situations and

keep themselves safe.

Children's health is promoted effectively by the childminder. Children are starting to make good choices in food because they are provided with healthy snacks and are also involved in growing their own fruit and vegetables in the garden. They learn good hygiene routines from an early age as they are supported to independently wash their hands after messy activities. Children have access to outdoor play on a daily basis as they can independently access an enclosed paved area all year round. The childminder makes good use of resources in the local community, through visits to the local park, soft play centre and children's centre groups, where children have the opportunity to use larger scale equipment and take part in music and movement activities.

Children make good progress because the childminder ensures that children have access to a wide range of experiences, which cover all areas of learning. The childminder uses observations to enhance provision and plan next steps. However, this is not systematically used to ensure that children are progressing in all areas of learning. Children enjoy looking at books and have regular opportunities to try out their early writing skills with chunky chalks and paints. They develop an understanding of number from an early age through singing number rhymes and everyday play experiences. Children gain skills in using technology as they have access to everyday equipment, such as, toy telephones and electronic keyboards. Children are inquisitive during child-initiated play as they explore their surroundings and make choices about their learning. The childminder sensitively supports their learning, offering encouragement as children master new skills. As a result, children are developing important skills for future learning.

Children behave well in the setting. This is because the childminder helps children learn about acceptable behaviour through displaying child friendly rules. This includes pictures for younger children. Children receive lots of praise for the efforts they make, for example, when they first use the stacker toy without adult support. Children's photographs are displayed in the room and in high quality learning journeys, which celebrate their achievements and increase their self-esteem. Children are learning about their own and other cultures and beliefs because they celebrate special occasions and festivals together.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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