

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	04/02/2011
Inspector	Barbara Wearing
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 has been registered since 1996. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in the Romiley area of Stockport, close to parks, shops, schools, pre-schools and transport links. The children have use of all the downstairs rooms, which includes the dedicated playroom/conservatory, lounge and kitchen/dining room, and there is a rear garden for outdoor play. There is also a toilet on the ground floor. The family have two cats.

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. She is currently caring for 13 children, nine of whom are in the early years age group. Care to children aged over five years to 11 years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Children are taken to and collected from local schools. The childminder holds a Level 5 childcare qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and developing a good range of skills in the bright, inviting and stimulating environment of the childminder's home. Excellent partnerships are in place with other professionals. These ensure that children are very well safeguarded and enable the childminder to build on children's learning experiences at other early years settings. Since her last inspection, the childminder has attended a number of relevant training courses and has achieved a Level 5 qualification in working with children and families. She has effectively evaluated her provision and has implemented a number of developments. This demonstrates her strong commitment to the continuous improvement of her childminding provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue with the implementation of the observation, assessment and development records, ensuring that next steps are small and achievable and that children's progress towards these and the early learning goals is monitored.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well protected as the childminder has an excellent knowledge of safeguarding procedures. She has experience of working with parents and other professionals in order to ensure children are protected from harm. Children's safety and welfare is paramount at all times. Risk assessments are carried out for the home and outings, minimising the risk of accidental injury, while allowing opportunities for children to explore and learn. Comprehensive policies, procedures and records are in place to further promote children's safety and well-being.

The childminder organises her home and daily and weekly routines very well. This enables her to provide a flexible service, meeting the needs of families and children, while ensuring children benefit from a wide range of activities. Children are extremely confident and relaxed in her warm and welcoming home. They benefit greatly from an extensive selection of consistently accessible, good quality, toys and resources. These offer high levels of stimulation to all children, supporting them in their good progress across all areas of learning. Children have space and opportunity to extend their play as they move between rooms and access further resources, following their interests and enhancing their learning. The childminder takes children to regular groups at the library and children's centre and on various well-planned trips. She ensures that toddler groups are of good quality and provide opportunities to support children in their development.

The childminder has a strong commitment and positive attitude to developing her knowledge of early years and improving her childminding provision. With the support of local authority development workers, and using knowledge from training courses, she reflects on how well she promotes outcomes for children and ensures that she continues to meet requirements. She recently secured a grant from the local authority, which she used to purchase new resources. These included a laptop and printer to use with the children and a secure wooden screen that is used to create role play areas, such as a hospital or home area.

Excellent partnerships are established with other settings children attend that deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage and with other agencies and professionals. This ensures children are safe and enables the childminder to skilfully extend activities and build on children's learning. For example, the childminder extends a bird topic being covered at a nursery children attend. They make binoculars together and the children then become interested in looking into the sky and space. The childminder follows their interests as they use the internet to find out about telescopes and they plan to go on a trip to see a local large radio telescope.

A variety of effective systems are in place for sharing information with parents. Parents share all necessary information regarding their children, ensuring their unique needs are met and helping them to settle with the childminder. Systems are beginning to be implemented to record children's skills and abilities and establish starting points from which to monitor their progress. Daily diaries completed by the childminder give parents a lovely account of their child's day.

They show activities they have enjoyed and give some feedback to parents about their progress, for example, when they are toilet training. Letters from parents demonstrate the high regard they have for the childminder. They particularly appreciate how she helps children settle, how sensitive she is to their individual food preferences, the variety of activities and the home-cooked meals she provides.

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

Observation, assessment and development records are in their infancy. The childminder is initiating systems to record observations of children's achievements, skills and goals for their future progress. They show what learning area they relate to but it is not yet clear how children's progress towards the next steps and early learning goals will be monitored. Some information is included to show how the childminder plans to support children in reaching these goals. The childminder clearly uses what she knows about each child and follows their interests to plan future activities. Therefore, learning is fun and meaningful.

Children are treated with the utmost care and respect and play very happily together. They greatly enjoy and benefit from the childminder's interaction as well as opportunities to play independently. They have many opportunities to make choices in their play. They receive praise and encouragement from the childminder and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging within the childminder's home. Children develop very good skills to keep themselves safe as the childminder actively encourages them to be assertive and have a sense of their own and others' rights. As part of her anti-bullying policy, the childminder teaches children that they are able to say 'no'. Children learn they have a right to privacy and are gently reminded of possible hazards, such as not to kneel on bricks. The childminder is committed to ensuring that all children are fully included and will sensitively challenge comments that reinforce stereotypes and may prevent children from exploring all that is on offer to them.

Children are very confident communicators. They talk to each other and the childminder to make their needs or wishes known and to describe and plan their play. They develop good language and literacy skills as they freely access the wide range of books and mark-making materials. The childminder is skilled at asking children questions and adding resources to extend their play and learning. Children become highly engaged in building with bricks and using their imaginations as they use small world resources. They build a zoo, naming the animals and proudly showing the childminder what they have built. The childminder asks questions to develop children's skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. She asks if they would like to make a circle or an oval train track, they count objects together and decide whether to have one long train to share or have one each. They easily fit pieces into a simple shape sorter and then move on to one that presents more of a challenge, naming the shapes as they put them in.

Children are intrigued as the childminder shows them how to turn a handle to open

and close the door of the toy fire station. They eagerly take turns to do it themselves, showing that they are inquisitive and curious learners. They learn about the natural world and develop healthy lifestyles as they spend time outdoors on a daily basis. Children hear a bird outside and the childminder explains that it may have seen a worm that has come above ground due to the wet weather. The resources and play materials represent the local community and the wider world, resulting in children developing a positive attitude to similarities and differences. Children eagerly select felt tips and paper from the wide selection of accessible creative resources. They say they are going to make a Chinese lantern as they have been learning about Chinese New Year at nursery and with the childminder. They have opportunities to use a wider range of creative materials and to engage in singing and music sessions at toddler groups.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted and children are nourished, hydrated and take regular exercise. They enjoy choosing menus and shopping for ingredients, and make healthy choices at snack time. They develop independence in their personal hygiene routines as they are supported in washing their hands before meals and snacks, using liquid soap and individual hand towels.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
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	1
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	1
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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