

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/04/2010
Inspector	Lesley Sharples
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 February 1997. She lives with her husband and their two children aged 12 and seven years in Fulwood, near Preston. The local area offers toddler groups, a childminder group, parks, a library and a children's centre nearby. Facilities for childminding comprise of the through lounge and dining room, kitchen and toilet facilities, all on the ground floor. There is an enclosed garden to the rear of the house. The family has a pet rabbit and there are fish in a covered pond in the garden.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Registration is for a total of five children and presently there can be four children in the early years age group looked after, of whom two may be under one year. There are currently four children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group.

The childminder is qualified to National Vocational Qualification level 3 in childcare and education, gained in March 1996, as well as previously gaining the certificate in family and community care. She is approved by the National Childminding Association as a quality assured 'Children come first' network childminder and retains her membership of the association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder's excellent knowledge and enthusiasm fully support children's individual needs given their ages, abilities and starting points. This enables them to make very good progress in an inclusive environment which highly values their uniqueness, independence, safety and ongoing welfare. The outstanding partnership with parents and other providers underpins a very successful shared commitment to the children's ongoing care and learning needs. The childminder is highly motivated in what she does and strives for excellence. This is reflected in her ongoing approach to the evaluation of her practice and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase accessibility of natural resources so that children are fascinated and intrigued to explore and discover for themselves.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The children are thoroughly safeguarded because the childminder has a clear understanding of safeguarding issues and the procedures to follow should she have any concerns. All written procedures are fully in line with current regulations and training has been completed on the common assessment framework. Excellent reference materials are held, including the local authority document 'Safeguarding for parents'. All required records for the safe care of the children are in place, extremely well organised and accessible. The childminder is highly vigilant and efficient in her approach to children's well-being. The stringent risk assessments cover all areas, both indoors and outdoors. These are regularly monitored and reviewed, along with the highly comprehensive policies and procedures for children's welfare, health and safety.

The childminder is committed to further professional development and continuous improvement. She fully embraces the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and works hard to ensure all aspects of the welfare, learning and development requirements are implemented. She uses her qualifications and experience, attends many different training events and acts on advice from the local authority to improve her service and therefore outcomes for children. Equality and diversity is addressed through her planning and resources, which contribute towards a positive attitude to the wider world and the people in it. This means that children learn about their own and other cultures.

The childminder's partnerships with parents are outstanding. Their views are sought and valued and they are happy to express their total and complete appreciation of the childminder and how much their children benefit and progress in her care. This shared approach is successful in strengthening the link with home and ensuring parents are kept fully up-to-date with aspects of their child's day. Partnerships are extended to other settings that children attend, and the written two-way exchange between other practitioners and the childminder informs planning to extend children's interests and ultimately their progress.

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

The children are actively engaged and very enthusiastic in what they do. Their warm and caring relationships with the childminder help them feel secure and contribute to a positive sense of belonging. The children have excellent opportunities through the day to have continuous access to the outdoors, which they take full advantage of. The outside area is very well resourced and set out to offer a rich, varied and imaginative range of learning experiences, which extends from indoors. This enables the children to move freely and self-select, making decisions about what they want to do. This is balanced by the childminder planning focussed activities, such as enhancing children's current interest in animals. They learn about textures and colours while being creative when decorating a pig, read stories about them and play with farm animals. The childminder uses everyday

opportunities to increase language. The children delight when they see a bird in the tree and they talk about its size and the sounds it makes.

Creative development is enjoyed in many forms and children are able to express themselves freely through mark making and design. For example, handprints are turned into animals with the addition of fingerprints and children proudly point to their artwork on display. Both large and small muscle development is encouraged through equipment in the garden as well as tools with malleable materials. They pick up garden implements and know to rake the grass, they design patterns with a wheel and talk about colours with confidence. Natural materials, such as sand and water, encourage measure and calculation. Resources which intrigue and fascinate are limited, which reduces the experience for children in trying to find out how things work for themselves. Otherwise, children have wonderful opportunities in all six areas of learning to promote their all-round development.

The children's individual learning journey files are very well presented and the childminder tries hard to achieve a story of children's progress. They contain photographs and written observations, both formal and spontaneous, to show achievements. Initial information gathered from parents is weaved into initial planning to help children make progress from the outset. Comments are included from parents and aid in planning for children's next steps relevant to their individual needs. The childminder is able to monitor progress through a chart so that all areas of learning are covered equally. A strength of the childminder's practice is her planning. She uses information well so that each child receives optimal challenge, which maximises their learning opportunities and supports their excellent progress.

The childminder's vigilant approach to children's well-being and safety is managed very effectively. The children are supported in their self-care skills. They see posters to remind them of when to wash their hands and use individual items to prevent cross-infection. The childminder provides a very good range of nutritious snacks and homemade meals for the children, as well as ensuring they are kept well hydrated. The children are learning about their own safety through a monthly practise of the emergency evacuation procedures, and the childminder discusses safety issues when out walking. Children behave very well as they are totally secure in their nurturing relationship with the childminder.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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

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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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