

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	18/01/2010
Inspector	Sharon Verma
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 was registered in 2002. She lives with her partner and three children in the Prescot area of Knowsley, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor and two of the bedrooms on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years old at any one time, no more than two of whom may be in the early year age range. She is currently minding two children, one of whom is in the early years age range. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register, and also the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register, and to provide overnight care for one child.

The childminder collects children from the local school and regularly attends toddler groups, libraries and other places of interest with the children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds an NNEB qualification. The family has a guinea pig as a pet.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are made to feel welcome, happy and settled in the care of the childminder. They access a range of age-appropriate activities and resources. Good partnerships with parents ensure that children's individual care needs are met, and the childminder is sensitive to children's individual needs. The childminder is developing her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), however, there are weaknesses in the planning, observation and assessment and the system for self-evaluation is still in its infancy. Children's welfare and safety are generally promoted well, however, there are some omissions in the documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information from parents about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child (Safeguarding and welfare) 01/02/2010
- request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, at the time of the child's admission to the provision (Safeguarding and welfare) 01/02/2010
- carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing, which includes an assessment of required adult:child ratios. (Safeguarding and welfare) 01/02/2010

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

- continue to develop systems for observation and assessment to ensure children make as much progress as possible towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points
- continue to develop the systems for identifying strengths and areas for improvement to raise the quality of the outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a sound understanding of safeguarding issues, and is aware of the action to take and whom to contact should she have concerns about a child's welfare. She has conducted a risk assessment of all areas of the home used by children to ensure their safety. She has not however, carried out a full risk assessment for each type of outings she goes on. Most of the regulatory documentation is in place, however, the childminder does not have written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, and has not secured information about who has legal contact with and parental responsibility for each child.

Systems for self-evaluation are in their infancy, however, the childminder has identified some areas for improvement, such as accessing further EYFS training and setting up a vegetable plot to help children learn how things grow and where their food comes from. The recommendation made at the previous inspection visit has been addressed, thus improving upon the outcomes for children.

The playroom is organised with most toys stored in accessible low-level storage systems. Thus, children independently access their resources and make choices about their play. The use of the family living room provides a quiet room where children can sleep comfortably in travel cots without disturbance, ensuring their individual sleep routines can be followed. Children have some opportunities to develop an understanding of other cultures through celebrations of festivals, such as Divali and Chinese New Year and the childminder has started to build a selection of resources, which promote equality and diversity.

Relationships with parents are good and this helps children to feel reassured and to feel that they belong. The childminder shares information with parents during daily informal talks and uses settling in visits to gather information about children. Thank you cards and letters from parents evidence their satisfaction with comments, such as 'We really appreciate everything you have done with and for our child, we can't thank you enough'. Partnerships with schools have been established to support children and provide consistent care.

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

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment that is organised with child size furniture, comfortable seating, toy storage boxes and displayed educational posters. The childminder has a good awareness of how children learn through play, and supports the children using play opportunities to foster their understanding of number, language and literacy. The daily routine is flexible and the childminder provides a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play opportunities, with emphasis on the children's interests. She has a reasonable knowledge of the EYFS framework, however, the systems for observing and assessing children are in their infancy and are not linked to the early learning goals or planning.

Children are happy and form close relationships with the childminder. They feel secure and are becoming confident learners. Whilst they are playing the childminder constantly talks to the children to encourage their learning. For example, she asked one young child to 'put the blue ball in the blue bucket'. Babies are starting to re-enact life through simple role play situations. When they had the play food out the childminder pretended to feed them with a large spoon and they later used the spoon to offer her some food. She also used this as an opportunity to teach new vocabulary, such as 'strawberry cake', and 'sandwich with lettuce tomato and chicken'. Babies babble happily and use gestures to ensure their needs and feelings are known and develop their competence in communicating through the frequent and enjoyable interactions with the childminder. Good provision is made for babies to develop their physical skills. The playroom is organised well to provide space for them to move about freely, with a range of age appropriate toys set out around the room for them to access and furniture positioned so they can crawl and pull themselves up. All children benefit from fresh air and a change of environment each day through lots of walk to places, such as the park, shops or school. They love to run in the garden, push or ride on wheeled toys or access the large outdoor play equipment installed by the childminder which includes a climbing frame, slide and swings. These help them to develop their physical skills and improve their balance and coordination. Younger children have opportunities to develop skills for the future through a variety of push buttons toys with lights and sounds, while older children have timed limited sessions on the computer or games console after school.

Children's individuality is respected because the childminder knows them well and makes allowances for their different personalities which helps build children's self-esteem. All children display their artwork in the childminder's home and this contributes to their sense of belonging. Children learn to behave well. The childminder has clear and consistent boundaries to ensure children know what is expected of them, and the use of regular praise and encouragement helps create a positive environment where children feel valued and good about themselves.

Children feel safe and secure in the childminder's care. Babies spontaneously climb up for regular cuddles and reassurance which is promptly provided by the childminder. They develop a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe,

as they take part in regular fire drills and talk about road safety when out walking with the childminder. Their good health is fostered through the healthy options the childminder provides for children at meal and snack times. Homemade nutritional meals are provided for all children including babies and fresh fruit is offered each day. Strict hygiene routines are in place to protect young children, such as sterilising feeding equipment, regular hand washing and using anti-bacterial sprays. Older children learn to wash their hands as part of the daily routine and understand that this helps to stop germs spreading so they stay well.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

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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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