

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	26/04/2010
Inspector	Ron Goldsmith
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children, aged four and seven years, in Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port. The whole of the ground floor of the house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

There are currently ten children on roll, six of whom are in the early years age group. The childminder is registered to care for four children under eight years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children are taken to local toddler groups and on outings in the area. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and she has completed the NCMA Level 3 Quality First quality assurance award. The childminder also has a National Vocational Qualification at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's full commitment to supporting the individual needs of children in her care. She offers an inclusive early years setting, where each child is respected as an individual and their diverse needs are effectively met. The childminder maintains excellent partnerships with parents, and other settings and professionals who help to care for minded children, ensuring high levels of consistency for each child. The welfare of the children is exceptionally well promoted as the childminder is vigilant, taking great care to ensure she meets all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to effectively promote outcomes for every child in her care. Regular and thorough use of reflective practice, and the systems for self-evaluation, have enabled the childminder to monitor and evaluate her childminding practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to build upon effective procedures to link the indoor and outdoor environment effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children feel very safe and secure in the warm, caring environment of the childminder's home, in which ensuring safety and emotional security take the highest priority. To facilitate this, the childminder works positively with children to develop very strong relationships that are based on mutual trust and respect.

Consequently, the children are happy, confident and talk openly with the childminder.

The childminder shows a high level of commitment to developing her knowledge by attending a wide range of training courses which lead to better outcomes for children. She is extremely enthusiastic and self-motivated and is able to support children's learning exceptionally well. The childminder ensures the environment is fully inclusive and she responds to children's individual interests exceedingly well. She has implemented rigorous systems to monitor and reflect upon her own practice, and has a very thorough approach to reflective practice and self-evaluation. Consequently she has an accurate understanding of her strengths and priorities for the future; for example, to further develop children's health and provide a more enabling environment, she has considered how to link the indoor and outdoor environments more effectively.

The childminder has excellent relationships with parents, ensuring all children are welcomed into the setting and receive continuity of care and learning. Parents state, 'We feel very much a part of what she does'. Successful communication systems ensure there is a two-way flow of information, and parents are able to fully contribute to the setting and to the progress their children make; for example, by making sure that they can add to their children's learning journey with their own comments and observations. Parents benefit from accessing an individual daily diary for their child, which details the events of the day at home and in the setting. They fully contribute to the assessment procedures, and learn about the progress their child has made through a detailed written summary of their child's learning and development. In addition, they also receive information and photographs of activities that children have participated in, and the plans for the following month.

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

Children make very good progress at the setting, as the childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are confident, enthusiastic and motivated to learn in an environment which is very well organised to meet their individual needs. All areas of learning are delivered through the wide range of activities and experiences, provided in an effective balance of adult and child-led activities. Highly effective planning of activities is closely linked to observations and assessments of the children, who the childminder clearly knows well; for example, the childminder sets up an activity with play building tools and vehicles, using sawdust to provide a raw material which children enjoy moving around, drilling into or shifting with their variety of tools. This helps promote children's fine motor skills but also delivers other learning opportunities, such as, through the language that the childminder and children use to talk about what is happening. Very good procedures are in place to gather information about all children; for example, likes, dislikes, routines and developmental starting points. Observations and assessments are collated in individual files to show progress in each area of learning, along with a variety of colourful photographs and examples

of the children's work.

Children's language and thinking skills are extended very well by the childminder. Opportunities are used in everyday situations to extend and develop their learning; for example, singing a song about washing away germs as they wash hands before snack. Children ask for, and join in with, favourite songs and nursery rhymes. The childminder interacts constantly with them and takes every opportunity to extend their learning; for example, talking about aeroplanes, which they see in the sky, and talking about windy days, as the wind lifts a corner of the mat they are sitting on outdoors. Children explore shapes, textures and numbers regularly through spontaneous events, such as, how many feet they can count going into their wellingtons or talking about the texture of slugs that they find in the garden. Children learn concepts of mathematical size by talking about little and big pictures, or tall towers of building blocks. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the world around them through well-planned activities. They visit local places of interest, such as a duck pond. Following the children's interest in gardening, they choose their own seeds to plant, check the progress of carrots and potatoes they have grown in grow bags and pots, and enjoy spring flowers they have planted. The childminder's excellent understanding of the children's individual learning ensures that all children are able to take part, and learning is appropriate for their stage of development. This is supported by well-planned activities to promote their learning of different cultures, and an understanding of issues and behaviours which affect the world around them, such as, a growing awareness of the need to recycle.

Children are welcomed into extremely clean and well-kept premises where they have ample space to play. They are kept safe, as the childminder's home is secure at all times and this is supplemented with appropriate safety equipment. Children's knowledge about personal safety is successfully encouraged by gentle reminders from the childminder, who explains why the trampoline cannot be used by small children, and by practising fire drills. Children are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene and are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. Children flourish as they access excellent opportunities and enjoy exploring the wide range of resources in the garden. These include a digging area, block-play, a writing area, sand and water play, ride-on toys and the 'who can we find?' area, which allows them to search for garden insects. Balanced and nutritious meals support children's very good health and effectively promote good lifestyle habits. The childminder uses a very positive and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour, which takes into account their age and understanding. The children thrive in the warm and caring environment and have developed very secure relationships with the childminder. Children are clearly happy and settled in her care, and express themselves confidently, knowing she will respond positively.

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	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

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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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