

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY275115
Inspection date	15/03/2011
Inspector	Jane Mount
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 November 2003. She had previously been registered as a childminder for many years and took a short break to further her career in another field. She lives with her husband and four children, aged five, seven, 19 and 22 years. The property is situated in Tring, Hertfordshire. It is within easy walking distance of shops, parks and schools. All areas of the premises are included in the registration and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. She is also registered to have two assistants working with her at the setting. When working alone, the childminder is registered for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, including three children in the early years age group. When working with assistants, she may care for no more than seven children under eight years, including five children in the early years age group. The childminder currently has 11 children on roll, including six children in the early years age range and four children in the later years age group. One child over the age of eight years also attends the setting. All children currently attend on a part-time basis.

Overnight care is not included in the registration and the family have a dog and a small tank of fish as pets. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association(NCMA) and part of a local childminding group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a high quality service which enables children to flourish in a child-centred environment. Excellent partnerships with parents contribute significantly to the childminder's knowledge of children's individual needs and support their continued development and progress. Children are safeguarded, and well-organised documentation underpins highly effective practice. Their learning is purposefully promoted and children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals, as the childminder tailors activities to the individual child. Close monitoring of the quality of the provision demonstrates the childminder's excellent understanding of her key strengths and her 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:

- developing further the use of a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and the childminder has an excellent understanding of how to safeguard children's welfare. She regularly undertakes safeguarding training, and child protection guidance leaflets and publications are readily available, alongside an informative safeguarding children policy. Consequently, she is clear on her role and responsibilities if she did have a concern. She also has ensured all household members have appropriate checks completed and all relevant documentation is available for parents to see in the childminder's comprehensive portfolio. Children's safety is paramount and the childminder ensures children are closely supervised and supported in their play. Highly effective measures are taken to keep children safe, including the use of high visibility jackets which are worn by children when out walking and safety wrist straps which are worn when on outings. Thorough and rigorous written risk assessments and on-going visual assessments ensure the environment remains safe and children are protected at all times.

The childminder strives to provide a high quality service and this is reflected in her outstanding practice. She has a secure knowledge of child development and a very good understanding of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Continuous professional development takes high priority and she has attended a varied range of early years courses and workshops. Also, to develop and extend her childcare practice further, she has completed a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 early years qualification. The childminder is fully aware of her key strengths and closely monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of her practice in many ways. She regularly reviews and updates all documentation and is proactive in seeking feedback from parents and obtaining the views of children. Other reflective systems, such as self-evaluation, are beginning to be developed to ensure continuous improvement.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by the exceptional organisation and outstanding commitment of the childminder. She has high regard for the well-being of all children and effectively and efficiently organises her time. The daily routine is planned around the needs of individual children to ensure an inclusive and enabling environment is provided. Exceptionally well-organised documentation, which is robust, presented well and effectively shared with parents, underpins highly effective childcare practice and ensures all children are fully included. Children and parents are welcomed into the childminder's home and parents are provided with exceptionally good quality information about the setting. Well-established and purposeful relationships with parents ensure children's care and learning needs are fully promoted. Parents are highly valued and their feedback about the childminder is extremely positive. Very effective partnerships are in place with other early years settings children attend to fully promote the integration of care and education.

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

Children's learning is positively promoted through the childminder's excellent knowledge of child development and the Early Years Foundation Stage. She effectively uses the framework to plan a broad and varied range of play experiences which are developmentally appropriate and cover the six areas of learning. She understands that every child is unique and activities are adapted to meet the individual needs of each child. Children's progress is closely monitored and systematic observation and assessment systems clearly show children's progress and achievements over time. This information is then used by the childminder when planning future activities for individual children. Consequently, all children's learning needs are identified and catered for and they are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Children are confident and motivated in their learning with well-balanced adult-led and child-initiated activities to encourage children to be active learners.

The indoor and outdoor environments are used to their full potential and children actively participate in an extensive range of stimulating play experiences in a dynamic and child-centred environment. From an early age, children's independence is encouraged and they play an active role in the setting which results in them being secure in their surroundings and feeling confident when making choices. Their communication, language and literacy development is fully promoted and the childminder is skilled at extending children's language through listening to and talking with them. Children enjoy selecting and handling books, and regular story times also support their early communication skills. Children's creative skills are fully promoted and they experience a variety of art and craft activities and use a varied range of mediums. They develop a strong sense of achievement and belonging as their artwork is highly valued and many pieces are displayed. Children have many opportunities to learn about the wider community as they regularly engage in a range of activities that encompass festivals from around the world. Children learn about the local community through outings, including visits to the library, parks and toddler groups. The childminder takes full advantage of the facilities in the local area and regular days out are also planned for. Children's understanding of the environment is increased through activities, such as learning about recycling. They enjoy feeding the birds in the garden and watching the wildlife and were delighted when they observed baby birds leaving a nesting box for the first time.

The childminder is proactive in implementing highly effective strategies to promote and safeguard children's health. Children gain an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy as they become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children are provided with nutritious food choices. Their dietary requirements are discussed with parents to ensure individual dietary needs are catered for appropriately. They have extensive opportunities to learn about how to stay healthy and, in a recent 'staying healthy' project, enjoyed learning about what constitutes a healthy balanced diet. Children's physical development is fully promoted. They participate in regular walks and visits to the park. They enjoy gym sessions where they confidently climb and balance, and love to dance to music.

They learn that physical activity is good for them and regularly talk about how exercise makes their muscles stronger and keeps their hearts healthy.

Children's safety is fully protected and they have extensive opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves and others safe. When out walking, they discuss road safety and know they must cross at the zebra crossing. The childminder is a positive role model and secure relationships between the childminder and children enable children to feel safe and highly valued in the childminding environment. Children's behaviour is exemplary, with positive behaviour fully promoted. Regular praise and encouragement from the childminder develops children's self-esteem. Through discussion, they learn how to behave well as they follow simple house rules, such as sharing and taking turns. The childminder successfully uses a variety of reward schemes and children delight in receiving a sticker if they have been helpful or kind.

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

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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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