

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/03/2011
Inspector	Lynne Talbot
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 August 2004. She lives with her husband and one child aged nine years in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a cat and there are fish in a tank.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently five children attending part-time hours, four of whom are within the early years age range. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and preschools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is recognised by the childminder who has a good understanding of their needs and interests. She creates an effective working relationship with parents and partnerships with other settings are a key strength. These steps ensure that children's needs are met and that activities offered support good progress overall in their learning. The childminder takes steps to promote children's health and welfare through established daily routines, minimising risks and a good safeguarding awareness. The childminder has a positive and proactive attitude towards continued development but this is yet to be fully developed to enable reflection on the overall care and continued outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further opportunities to help children work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that there need to be agreed values and codes of behaviour to work together harmoniously
- develop methods to help children find out about their environment with particular reference to care for the environment and sustainability
- gain further understanding of reflective practice in order to confidently identify aspects of the childminding service that are done well and those aspects that might be improved, so to continue to promote good outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is well-promoted because the childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a firm understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding implementing clear procedures which fully protect children. The childminder ensures that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Clear and robust risk assessments for the home and outings are undertaken and reviewed regularly. They include assessments for the use of the computer and associated leads and connections, to fully protect children in all areas of play. Children explore with close supervision and take part in daily safety awareness routines. They learn about road safety, stranger danger and take part in regular fire evacuation drills to broaden their personal safety awareness. Procedures for illness and medical assistance are well-planned with back-up support organised to ensure children's safety.

The childminder offers an inclusive service to children in her care and ensures that she works with parents to understand each child as an individual. She is aware of each child's learning style and uses this when organising their day, thereby, ensuring that every child achieves. Examples of this are seen in the planned activities focussing on animals which have arisen from input from parents regarding the current interests of their children. Daily diary books support the care offering a medium for welfare and care issues to be shared. Children explore the local community and the wider society in which they live. Cultural celebrations are explored, such as, Chinese New Year and the Divali festival of light. The childminder shares her own language and nationality, Czech, with children and they observe linguistic diversity learning songs and sharing books and stories in the new language. The relationship with parents is good and is enhanced by the diary and verbal exchanges each day as well as questionnaires. Email and text communication is used effectively and parents are invited to share children's planned learning using 'parent voice' sheets periodically. Parents comment that the childminder provides a 'warm, caring and safe environment' and that they are 'very satisfied'. The childminder is very proactive in developing relationships with other settings that children attend to ensure consistency in the approach towards learning for children. She writes to other settings to introduce herself including a copy of parental permission for her to work with others. The result is the building of a method to share information, such as, children's main learning goals enabling the childminder to build her planning to enhance the overall learning experience for children. This is a key strength.

The childminder shows an awareness of development and seeks feedback from parents to ensure that her care is having a positive impact on outcomes for children. She has completed the required training and holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in childcare, learning and development. She completes training, such as, safeguarding and food hygiene and is booked to attend courses in diversity and disability awareness. She demonstrates a clear commitment to continuous development. However, while self-evaluation processes have been initiated, they are not yet sufficiently in-depth to form the basis of internal review to focus the strengths or areas for development. Children achieve and make good

progress in their learning overall because resources are offered to them which provided variety and stimulation. Local community resources provide an extended range of opportunity.

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

The childminder uses the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements well to offer experiences to meet children's individual needs. When planning experiences to help them to take the next steps in their learning, she successfully integrates her knowledge of their abilities, their interests and activities undertaken at other settings. Useful learning journals have been introduced to track development and ensure that activities offered are balanced. Medium term planning reviews the next steps for each child under each area of learning and the short term plans for the week are displayed for parents each day on a chalk board. Consequently, children make good progress overall. Children are very content and enjoy their time spent with the childminder. They are actively involved in their learning. They play confidently, seeking and choosing from accessible materials. Young children take drawing materials to their table and experiment with mark making. They use an array of colours trying all the pens available as they develop their pictures. Children show developing concentration and enjoy books and stories. Younger children seek and enjoy tactile books getting excited as they feel the textures on the pages. Children begin to follow the written text of the story 'reading' to the childminder as they look at the illustrations. The childminder is skilled at encouraging learning and gently coaxes children to begin counting and calculation. For example, they count the passengers on a bus within a puzzle book and calculate the totals as each page adds another passenger.

Children are inquisitive and explore measuring with a tape measure. They build and construct talking about models made by others and building towers of their own comparing their height with their own height. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe and secure. Children copy the childminder's behaviour and good example. Positive reinforcement, alongside sticker reward charts, generally promotes acceptable behaviour. However, children are repeatedly intolerant of others playing alongside them which results in frequent intervention by the childminder. Children are not yet fully supported to work as part of a group, take turns and share fairly, or understand that there need to be agreed values and codes of behaviour to work together harmoniously. Children begin to make sense of the world around them when they play with role play materials. They pour, mix and measure with the home corner materials making meals and presenting them to the childminder. Children have a sense of belonging because they view photographs of themselves on the wall, have their own laminated placemats for meal times, explore their personal folders and view welcome posters showing children's work. They follow a robust hygiene routine including the use of hand wipes before eating and using colour coded individual towels. Children request food when they are hungry and enjoy a range of fruits. Older children show that they are developing knowledge of what is healthy when they discuss vitamins and minerals. They are also aware of safety and discuss the danger of apple skin for

younger children who may choke on it. Children are helped to explore the food chain when they plant tomato seedlings into pots to care for them and observe the growth of the fruits. They are beginning to help to tidy toys away, with support, but as yet have not explored care for the environment, recycling or care for the equipment in the home. This means that children are not yet developing an understanding of their environment or sustainability.

Children show a developing interest in the local and wider community. Themed play sets, such as, a post office and a train station help them to explore real-life experiences. The childminder introduces visits to the local railway station, social groups, the library and the museum to help children to become aware of their surroundings and extend their social skills. They plan trips and discuss those that have already taken place exercising their memory and learning to explain what took place. For example, children talk about a trip to the park when they fed the ducks and enjoy reviewing photographs taken on the day by the childminder on the digital camera. This helps them to begin learning about modern technology. Children are clearly helped to develop the habits, attitudes and skills necessary to help them to develop skills for the future.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	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	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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met