

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/11/2009
Inspector	Lynne Kathleen 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 February 2006. She lives with her daughter aged five years in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via a single step.

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 five children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. There are currently three children attending part-time hours all of whom are within the early years age range.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is respected by the childminder because she develops a good knowledge of each child's needs and interests. She forms a positive relationship with parents and carers, adapting her care to meet changing needs and offering good feedback regarding learning, development and welfare issues. This helps to ensure that children's needs are met and that activities promote good progress across most areas. Partnerships with other agencies working with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are yet to be fully established. The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's welfare using established routines for health, minimising risks and has firm safeguarding awareness. She has an effective approach towards self-evaluation, continuing to review her work planning for further development; this commitment provides a good basis for improvement thereby maintaining a service that is responsive to children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the opportunities for children to gain an increased knowledge of other cultures and beliefs, special educational needs and disabilities
- develop further the links with parents and families by sharing information, offering support for extended learning in the home and involving parents in the learning programme
- develop the links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is very well promoted because the childminder has a good knowledge of the EYFS. She has a clear understanding of her roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding, updating her training regularly and including further training within her plan for development. Children are fully safeguarded because the childminder ensures that all required persons are suitably checked. Thorough risk assessments, completed daily and annually, are completed for the premises and outings. Children are given ongoing reminders of how to keep themselves safe and have opportunities to explore safety within the home and the community. For example, they complete emergency evacuation each month, discuss and practise road safety daily, and attend sessions within local centres focussed on fire safety with input from the fire service. These methods enable children to learn about personal safety when away from the home.

The childminder offers an inclusive service for all children in her care, ensuring that she is aware of their individual learning styles and is using this in her planning thereby narrowing the achievement gap. This is shown when discussing how children of similar ages differ in their approach to learning such as differences in concentration, physical approach and interest in creative works at a similar age. The childminder has a good understanding of cultural differences and the impact of inequality, with provision to support children's awareness of the wider community. She completes some planning to develop children's awareness and knowledge of other cultures and beliefs, special educational needs and disabilities through everyday activities but recognises the positive impact of continuing to develop this further. The childminder has a positive attitude towards working with other agencies to support children but relationships with other settings that children attend are, as yet, to be established to support a consistent learning approach. The relationship with parents and carers is good enabling them to share general information and making good use of questionnaires and newsletters. They comment that they 'highly recommend' the childminder, state that she offers children a healthy diet and that they 'trust her implicitly'. However, there is not yet a system to involve parents in establishing assessment for children's development or to involve them in the planning for learning and development, which means that opportunities to link learning in the home with that at the childminder's are not explored.

The childminder demonstrates enthusiasm for her work and is motivated to continue making changes that improve outcomes for children. She uses self-evaluation and has a clear picture of her strengths and areas for development maintaining a vision for the future. Recent improvements include the learning files for each child with a development plan for future training. Children make good progress in their learning because the childminder makes good use of resources. The environment is conducive to learning, safe and well cared for. Children independently seek out activities moving freely from room to room thereby initiating learning and continuing to develop independence.

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

Children are confident and enjoy the time spent in the childminder's care. They make good progress in their learning because the childminder has a good understanding of the EYFS. Activities are matched to the full range of children's needs. The childminder uses spontaneous observations together with summary observations that link to the areas of learning from which next steps for each child are identified. Broad weekly planners illustrate the play for the week to parents and carers whilst children's progression is charted within their files. This demonstrates a methodical approach to ensuring that each child is given opportunities to fulfil their potential although there is limited involvement from parents in the learning and development programme.

Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities and are beginning to develop their communication skills, vocalising and imitating the childminder. For example, they explore shape, size and weight with shape sorters, beginning to repeat words after the childminder. They name the shapes and colours, counting as they place bricks into slots, repeating 'on' and 'off' as they remove and replace the lid, and listening as the childminder shows them how to push and pull items along the floor. Close and affectionate interaction between children and the childminder demonstrates that children feel secure and safe. They are confident showing good levels of self-esteem and building strong relationships within the setting. The childminder anticipates children's need for new activities, offering items such as mechanical vehicles that can be wound to move freely along the floor. Children show delight as they learn to operate these items, beginning to explore early technology investigating actions that have an effect on others.

Children are creative and confidently seek musical instruments to use, exploring those to shake, beat or hit such as maracas, tambourines, bells and drums. Children demonstrate confidence and clear enjoyment as they clap and sway to the music they produce, receiving frequent praise and encouragement from the childminder. Children move on to musical tables and keyboards, later to mats that play tunes as they are walked on, linking areas of music-making in different rooms. They are making clear choices and showing a clear positive disposition to learning, resulting in rapid progress. Children are beginning to gain some understanding about diversity through basic play activities although, as yet, have fewer opportunities to understand special educational needs or disabilities. Children benefit from planning for physical development using facilities at local children's centres as well as other community facilities. Parklands and lakes are enjoyed each day to explore the surroundings and extend physical abilities. Other community facilities are used, such as the museum, which is a resource that offers additional opportunities for extended learning and includes special displays and activities suitable for the younger child. The childminder is mindful of her role in ensuring safety and helps children to understand personal safety. They take part in emergency evacuation each month, helping them to reinforce personal safety within the home. Children are beginning to learn about personal hygiene through well-defined routines. They have well-established routines including washing their

hands before eating and reach out to the childminder to be lifted into highchairs before meals. This helps to reinforce good routines for social mealtimes.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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

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