

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY332441
Inspection date	08/03/2010
Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2006. She lives with her husband and four school-aged children near the centre of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. The property is close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding and is accessible, with rooms on the first floor also used for sleeping at times. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog, a cat and a hamster.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for four children under eight years at any one time, no more than two of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group on a part-time basis. She supports a number of children with English as an additional language.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children, and also has a car. She attends several local groups on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Each child has access to a wide range of experiences, positive interaction with a skilled and knowledgeable practitioner and real opportunities to develop as an individual. Inclusion underpins the childminder's practice and she provides extensive support to meet children's individual needs. As a result children progress well in their learning and development in relation to their starting points and their welfare needs are all well promoted. Strong partnerships with parents, and other professionals when necessary, ensure that all relevant information is exchanged. The childminder is well organised and proactive about keeping herself updated to ensure that she meets all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage well. She acted on recommendations made at her last inspection, and her thorough self-evaluation demonstrates a strong capacity to maintain continuous improvement in future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop planning to link into children's previously identified next steps.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder keeps updated about local procedures to report any safeguarding concerns, refreshes her training every three years and as a result is confident about signs and symptoms that would cause her concern. Effective safeguarding procedures are supported through record keeping, such as for accidents, full parental access to all the childminder's policies and procedures and the vetting of all adults in the household. Regularly updated risk assessments enable the childminder to put appropriate measures in place to minimise the potential harm to children within the premises, on outings and in some activities. All necessary documentation is in place, appropriately shared with parents and stored so that confidentiality is maintained. Promoting equality and diversity is an obvious strength of the childminder. She is proactive when working with those who have English as an additional language to ensure that their home language is valued and aspects of their culture used to enhance the knowledge and understanding of all those attending. Resources are well deployed to allow children independent access and children's experiences are extended by regular attendance at several groups offering physical or creative activities.

Parents are given information about the broad timetable for the week to aid their understanding of what children do alongside detailed information about the childminder's policies and procedures. They are encouraged to discuss the care they want for their child, and have regular opportunities to express their views on the provision. The childminder provides them with daily diaries detailing children's care routines and also access to their child's observation and photograph books to keep them informed about significant achievements and progress. They welcome the flexibility of the provision, with the childminder striving to accommodate their work patterns and differing needs. The childminder has developed effective partnerships with other local provision to ensure continuity of care and learning when children also attend other settings. She works with other local childminders to organise ongoing training opportunities, identified through effectively monitoring and self-evaluation, to develop her practice. She remains committed to providing a quality childminding service for children.

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

Children clearly enjoy their time with the childminder and benefit from the positive interaction they have with her and other children. They have opportunities to access a wide range of age-appropriate activities, both within a home environment and in the local community. These provide effective learning and development across all areas, including a balance of indoor and outdoor, child-led and adult-supported activities. Babies, for example, have plenty of space for movement, with toys placed on the floor to capture their interest and provide opportunities for tactile experiences, such as with treasure boxes. They practise their hand-eye coordination and like to make lots of noise, they join in with older children's enjoyment of instruments and share books together. Older children independently

access the toy shelves and boxes, selecting items to play with which they bring to the childminder if they want support, or to show her how they skilfully press buttons to make items work. They particularly enjoy playing with realistic small world toys. The childminder has monthly themes and plans an outline of activities each week. She compiles learning journeys for each child which include regular observations of their achievements, supported by photographs and examples of their creative work, which demonstrate their good progress in all areas of learning. These assessments include consideration of what children's next steps need to be, but the childminder does not routinely bring this information into her next planning.

Children show they feel safe within the setting through their confident movement around, familiarity with routines and obvious comfort with the childminder, for example, going to sit with her to look at books. Their understanding is reinforced through regular routines on outings and taking part in fire drills monthly. They experience opportunities for physical play and access to fresh air daily, for example, they normally walk and at times help on the allotment, as the childminder encourages them to adopt healthy lifestyles. Many parents send their child's meal, although the childminder discusses how these can be healthy, and she provides appropriate meals and snacks herself carefully considering their content. Children are well-hydrated with older children having constant access to their cups, with the childminder ensuring babies are frequently offered drinks also. Children are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the setting, with the childminder asking their opinions after outings, they also have their own pegs and self-register daily. Particular care is taken to identify and meet their individual needs, with the childminder developing her pronunciation of words in some children's home languages to ensure they understand each other. Positive behaviour is promoted with the children obtaining reward certificates for good behaviour and all children are made aware of the boundaries, which are displayed, so they know what is expected of them. Their behaviour is generally very good and underpins their developing skills such as playing together and sharing.

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	1
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	1
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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