

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	16/11/2011
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 2006 and holds a relevant childcare qualification. She lives with her child, aged six-years-old, in a house in the Bennetts End district of Hemel Hempstead. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of two children in this age range and is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children under the age of eight years. There are currently two children on roll, of whom one is in the early years age group. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home and one bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two pet cats and two rabbits. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children clearly feel safe in this established, family environment where the childminder nurtures children's care, learning and development in a generally inclusive manner. A key strength is the childminder's conscientious efforts to drive her own improvement through reflective practice demonstrating her good capacity for improvement. The welfare requirements are fully met. Planning, observation and assessment systems are closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and effectively support children's good progress towards the early learning goals. She builds good relationships with parents to underpin children's welfare.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend children's opportunities to develop positive attitudes to diversity with respect to different cultures and disabilities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is demonstrably keen to continue to improve her childcare skills so that she can give the children the best possible experience when they are with her. She talks enthusiastically about her role as a childminder and her self-evaluation shows that she strives to do her best at everything she does. Children are happy and settled and show a clear sense of belonging in this gentle and friendly home setting. Children's welfare is ably safeguarded by the childminder who has a secure knowledge of local safeguarding procedures set out in a written policy. The childminder has undergone suitable vetting checks. Comprehensive risk assessment is in place and effective action is taken to manage or eliminate risks for children. For example, the childminder has devised a clear procedure for evacuating her home and quarterly fire evacuation drills are carried out and

recorded to secure children's safety in an emergency situation. The childminder provides written policies and procedures and all required written records underpin the safe and efficient operation of the business.

The learning environment positively promotes children's progression towards the early learning goals. For example, the children are able to choose what they want to play with from the wide range of toys, books and resources available to them. The childminder is in the process of cataloguing her toys to make a 'choices book' to extend the opportunities for children to make independent choices and decision making. The childminder's satisfactory understanding of anti-discrimination means that she provides a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. She ensures that she understands each child's background, cultures and beliefs. However, she has already identified that she wishes to extend the range of activities to develop positive attitudes in the children towards diversity with respect to different cultures and disabilities.

The childminder recognises the value of continuous quality improvement and how it impacts on children's achievement. Since the last inspection, she has gained a childcare qualification, secured the fire blanket on the wall in the kitchen and reviewed her policies. She has devised ways of recording evidence in the children's learning journeys to demonstrate the two-way flow of information between home and childminding setting. The childminder keeps a list of things to do to improve her practice, which includes the action required and the date implemented. The childminder has driven her own development effectively and has been particularly proactive in seeking information and guidance using the Ofsted website and various publications.

The childminder does not currently care for any children who attend other early years provision. However, she is aware of the importance of sharing information with other settings when appropriate to support children's continuity of care. Effective verbal communication strategies demonstrate the value placed upon partnership working by the childminder who makes every effort to keep parents fully informed of all matters relating to their child's care and welfare. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents during daily conversations with parents and carers. The childminder provides detailed information and keeps them informed both verbally and through the communication book.

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

The childminder uses the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework very well, which ensures babies and young children make good progress in their learning, through good quality play activities supported by competent interaction. Children are very relaxed in the childminder's care because she develops secure and caring relationships with them and is always aware of their individual needs. Young children feel safe and are comfortable exploring the child-friendly, well-equipped playroom environment. They show an interest in toys such as a miniature washing machine with buttons and flaps and simple mechanisms and begin to learn to

operate them. They choose a cookie jar shape sorter and the childminder sits on the floor, helping them to post the shapes into the jar. She names the colours and shapes and uses mathematical language such as 'one more' and 'the green triangle'. Children receive lots of praise for their achievement and their faces glow with pride and developing self-esteem.

The childminder is proud of her Learning Journey folders where she makes regular observations of the children's learning. Information from observation and assessment is linked to the six areas of learning and the childminder is using the 'development matters' criteria in a very effective way to guide her planning of activities which actively promotes children's progress. Children enjoy Buggy Buddy activities with their childminder. This is a Hertfordshire activity based scheme that aims to promote walking for young children, enabling them to make the most of their outside environment and find ways to have fun and learn on their journeys. Photographs show the children on a trip to a marina with 'Pipo', the ant. They recognise and count different types of colours of vehicles that can be seen on the journey and watch the boats go by. Children respond to people and objects in their environment and squeal with delight as the ducks eat the bread and come right up to the buggy. Children join in with the singing and dancing and develop their social skills with others at the local toddler group and show some control in their use of tools and equipment. The garden provides many opportunities for play across the six areas of learning. For example, children have opportunities to plant and grow strawberries and tomatoes.

Children are becoming aware of healthy lifestyles and the relevance of hygiene practices. Children benefit from well-thought through nappy changing procedures which reduce the risk of cross-infection and good hygiene practices which relate to hand washing and safe food handling. Singing songs reinforces young children's understanding the importance of daily practices such as washing their hands before snacks and meals. Very young children are encouraged to attempt to wipe their own high chair tray after lunch and are praised for their achievement. Children take part in an appropriate range of activities that contribute to their good health and physical development. They have regular opportunities to play outside in the garden or at local play areas. This ensures they get plenty of exercise and fresh air. The childminder teaches children about keeping safe. For example, she reminds children of her house rules and when out and about she teaches them road safety. Consequently, children behave well in response to the clear expectations of the childminder. She promotes sharing and consideration for others through her management of children's play and uses distraction techniques effectively when disputes occasionally occur.

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	3
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	3
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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