

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY343561
Inspection date	19/01/2010
Inspector	Sharon Verma
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 partner and three year old child in the Laffak area of St Helens, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is available to minded children. An enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on both parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes and collects children from the local school. Children are taken on outings to local parks, libraries toddler groups and other places of local interest. She has a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in early years. The family has a pet cat.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

An exciting, welcoming and inclusive service is provided where children thrive and make excellent progress. The childminder is highly committed to each individual, successfully including each one, understanding their home and individual needs well, and giving them the best opportunities to learn and develop through a wealth of experiences and play choices. The childminder is highly successful at involving parents and others, in order to promote consistent care and learning. Her organisation and commitment to improve are very good. Improvement is clearly demonstrated through the childcare training undertaken, and the childminder's ability to provide and document the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements. There is however, a small omission in the documentation regarding who has parental responsibility for each child, and activities which promote equality and diversity are limited.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information from parents about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child (Safeguarding and welfare). 02/02/2010

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

- promote positive attitudes to diversity through activities that encourage children to talk about similarities and differences and the reasons for these.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has an excellent understanding of safeguarding issues. She has attended up-to-date training, has a detailed policy on safeguarding and is very aware of the procedures to follow should she have concerns about a child. Her focus is always upon helping all children to make progress and promoting their welfare. For example, thorough risk assessments are conducted for the premises and all outings, covering all eventualities, to ensure children's safety is of paramount importance. Her arrival and departure policy provides clear procedures to ensure children's safety at these busy times. The childminder's organisation and management is excellent. She has examined the EYFS in detail in order to maintain records, policies and procedures which fully support all the welfare and development requirements. There is however, a small omission in the documentation regarding who has parental responsibility for each child.

The childminder has great enthusiasm for continuous improvement. She undertakes regular training and reads widely about childcare issues to keep her ideas fresh and up-to-date. She has addressed the recommendation made at the last inspection, and now provides a wide variety of natural resources which promote sensory development and exploration for younger children; such as, hiding pine cones in boxes of shredded paper for young children to discover. Space, toys and resources are organised effectively to meet children's needs and promote children's growing independence. They confidently make choices and initiate their own play. Children develop a sense of community as they celebrate each other's birthdays and other special events. They have access to resources which depict positive images of diversity however, opportunities for children to learn about the similarities and differences of others are limited.

The childminder has excellent partnerships with parents. She provides them with extensive information about her service and keeps them regularly informed about their child's achievements. She actively involves them in their children's learning by encouraging them to bring items from home for the monthly topic, and to contribute to the children's learning journeys on a regular basis. This also helps to keep the childminder informed about children's interests and all aspects of their development. At Christmas parents receive a photograph album containing photographs of the children throughout the year. The childminder has also devised parent questionnaires to consult with parents on a regular basis about the provision. Parents are extremely complimentary about the childminder and comment very favourably on the detailed daily diaries, which she diligently completes each day, which give them a good insight into what their child is doing. She is committed to liaising with local schools, in order to support children's learning at home and has established links with the local school attended by the children.

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

Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals as the childminder engages and supports them well. She creates a fun and exciting learning environment and makes regular changes to the activities and resources to provide children with renewed interest and stimulation. She has an excellent knowledge of the EYFS and uses topics and children's interests as starting points when drawing up detailed, yet flexible, monthly plans of activities which cover the six areas of learning. The childminder carefully monitors the children's development; she records their progress using photographs and written observations, and identifies the next steps to take to further their development. Information provided by parents and other settings are also used in future planning to ensure children are fully engaged and challenged.

With each monthly topic, the children's notice board is changed accordingly. With the current theme of Winter the childminder had displayed some of the children's winter collage pictures, as well as photographs of footprints in the snow, icicles and winter nature scenes. She used these as discussion points to expand children's knowledge and understanding of the world and develop their communication and language skills. The role play and reading areas are also used to further enhance the theme and enrich the children's learning with resources including polar bears, penguins and winter stories. The childminder used the recent cold weather as a good opportunity for children to explore and experiment with ice. After playing outside in the snow, the children brought in snow and ice from outside; they watched it melt then poured the water into cups and saucers. The childminder also froze some pebbles and marbles in ice cubes and made a frozen hand by filling a rubber glove with water and freezing it, to further help children explore the properties of ice and water. Children's physical skills are promoted through regular trips to the park, nature walks through the woods, splashing in puddles and crunching over the frozen grass, all of which they thoroughly enjoy. They learn about nature and the environment as they put waste in to the compost bin; they plant, care for and eat vegetables such as, potatoes and beans in the childminder's garden. The childminder provides lots of opportunities for children to develop their numeracy and problem solving skills through activities such as counting, number songs, making birdseed pinecones and measuring out ingredients for baking. She uses interesting ways to encourage children's early mark making, such as filling a builder's tray with small stones and encouraging children to make marks and shapes.

Children are happy and enjoy close, warm and supportive relationships with the childminder. She is very attentive to their needs, and gives them lots of attention. While they are playing the childminder constantly talks to the children, using good questioning and repetitive language to enhance their communication skills. They enjoy and benefit from learning about their local area and world around them through trips out to places, such as the Victoria Park, Sherdley Park and Car Mill Dam. They respond very well to the childminder's praise and encouragement. Thus, children understand what they have done well and what they have achieved, which boosts their confidence and self-esteem. They also receive stickers for

positive behaviour, which reinforces good behaviour and caring attitudes to others.

The childminder promotes children's health and welfare to a very high level. She ensures they have daily access to outdoor play in the garden or at the nearby park where they can develop their strength, stamina, balance and coordination. Children are offered healthy choices at snack and meal times. A large variety of fruit is available daily, and freshly prepared food, including sandwiches, baked potatoes, cottage pie and fish pie are provided at meal times. Children's dental hygiene is promoted very well; the childminder supports the 'Stop the Rot Campaign', and ensures children clean their teeth each day. She has highly effective health and hygiene procedures to help prevent the spread of infection and maintains her home to a high standard of hygiene. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in the home through regular fire drill practices, and on outings they become aware of road safety and the importance of not talking to strangers.

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	1
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	1

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	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	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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