

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY344368
Inspection date	06/04/2011
Inspector	Jo Rowley
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 registered in 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and 10 in St Albans, Hertfordshire, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the childminder's house, excluding the utility room, is used for childminding and children have access to a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two cats and two gerbils.

The childminder provides care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays and she regularly works with an assistant. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range and is currently minding seven children in this age group, all on a part time basis. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and she uses this understanding to ensure that children's individual needs and requirements are consistently met. Children are offered a extensive range of stimulating and fun activities and opportunities, which supports the effective promotion of their learning and development. The childminder's extremely professional and friendly approach to working with parents enables them to feel secure about exchanging information, regarding their children, further supporting their consistent care. The childminder purposely reviews her work and has an excellent attitude to self-evaluation, actively seeking feedback from children and parents, on a regular basis. This allows her to build a truthful picture of her practice and implement any improvements required. Therefore, she promotes a service which is highly responsive to the needs of the children and their families using her setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing further systems to ensure that all six areas are equally planned for.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's comprehensive understanding of her role and responsibilities, relating to safeguarding children, ensure that every child's welfare is prioritised and promoted at all times. This is further supported by a well written procedure, which

is shared with parents, supporting the childminder's understanding of safeguarding responsibilities. Additional training enables the childminder to clearly identify any child that may be at risk and take appropriate action. Children's well-being is significantly enhanced by the childminder's excellent organisation, thorough written procedures and effective risk assessments ensure that hazards are minimised and children's safety is well promoted at all levels. All written procedures and policies are shared with parents as the childminder has designed a brochure detailing everything parents need to know. This promotes parental awareness and consistency within the setting. Children are building up a very good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe as they take part in the emergency evacuation procedure. The procedure is practised on a regular basis and children are able to explain why they have to evacuate and which exit they may need to take, adding information about where they go to stay safe. The childminder attends a wide range of additional training in order to inform her practice and ensure that her setting is the best she can provide. For example, since her last inspection the childminder has completed a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification in childcare, learning and development.

The childminder shows a genuine enjoyment of her work and is highly committed to continue in developing her practice and successfully improving outcomes for children, through self-evaluation. She actively seeks feedback from parents and children through written questionnaires. For example, children write about their favourite things and are asked if they would like to see anything changed. One child wrote his favourite thing was the childminder's cooking and most children are happy with how things are. If changes are requested the childminder does what she can to accommodate these, for example, one child doesn't want to watch television before school so the childminder easily accommodates this by providing other activities before school. Therefore the childminder is highly effective in meeting the needs of the families attending her setting.

The childminder utilises resources exceptionally well. Her home is warm and welcoming and toys are highly accessible in the well-equipped play room, enabling all children to make independent choices, whilst promoting inclusion. The childminder strongly believes in treating each child uniquely as an individual and she has an excellent understanding of promoting a service which is both welcoming and inclusive for all children and their families. Her sensitive procedures for gathering information on each child, ensures that she can build a greater understanding of each child's individual background, needs and beliefs. This knowledge enables her to plan relevant activities and ensure that children are offered appropriate support.

Children feel valued and their self-esteem is promoted because they are fully encouraged to understand and respect each other and are highly praised for their efforts and achievements. The childminder's excellent relationship with parents, and carers, ensures that there is consistent and ongoing communication. She keeps them informed of their children's progress by completing daily diaries and offers information to each parent regarding activities and planning, giving parents the opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. Consistency of care is promoted as the childminder has established some working relationships with others, providing care for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. For

example, topics and theme information is shared with staff at the local pre-school enabling the childminder to extend the children's learning within her setting, as well as enhancing partnership working to further promote children's learning and development.

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

Children are content and spend their time purposefully. They thrive in their environment and make excellent progress in their learning and development because the childminder has a comprehensive knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She implements rigorous observation and assessment procedures and uses the information gained from these to inform the overall and individual planning, which is very effective. Although the childminder acknowledges that by further developing her planning she will demonstrate that all areas of learning are equally promoted. Children play an active part in all aspects of this busy setting, as for example, they are encouraged to express themselves, using their imaginations. For example, children recreate the 'Cinderella' story. They dress up in their outfits, playing the parts of Cinderella and the ugly sisters, then change parts to become the prince and those looking for the girl who fits the 'glass shoe'. Children use different voices as they act out the story, dancing at the ball and trying on the glass shoe. They know the story word perfect and express themselves through a tremendous performance.

The childminder has an excellent awareness of the children's individual interests and needs, including this information in the planning to ensure that children's development is strongly promoted. Children play a full role in their own learning and they develop positive attitudes to this because the childminder confidently enables children to develop their play and ideas and they relish in her interaction. Children's communication, language and literacy are promoted as, for example, they are encouraged to self-register on arrival. Their creativity is promoted and the childminder encourages this as she fully involves herself in the activities planned. An example of this is when the childminder and children use raw ingredients to create 'bubble bath' and 'hand soap' for Mother's Day gifts. They talk about the ingredients and how when mixed together they create such beautiful smells.

Children show a strong sense of security and their behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe as they confidently choose resources; they happily express their individual views and approach the childminder for help, when required. Their self-esteem and confidence are highly promoted as the childminder praises and encourages them consistently. For example, as children help out at lunch time. Each child has a role whether it is laying the table, choosing the cups or carrying food to the table, each child is praised effectively for their help. Further opportunities where children's self-esteem and confidence are promoted, include as the regular praise they receive. For example, one child informs the childminder that it is another child's turn at drinking from the pink cup today; she is praised for her kindness in sharing. The childminder's settling-in procedures help them to feel welcome and valued and the childminder's excellent partnership with parents means that children who use English as an additional language or have special

educational needs are offered appropriate support and activities that promote their individual development.

Children are offered a rich and varied range of experiences that meets their needs and promotes their development, because the childminder offers interesting activities. For example, when choosing to play in the well-equipped garden the children have opportunities to use resources that are also available inside as the childminder 'brings' inside play to the outside. They also access resources, such as, bubble makers and scarves which along with their imaginations are used to create their own games.

Children's mathematical development is promoted as the childminder utilises all learning opportunities. For example, a height chart is displayed. All children are regularly measured and their details recorded so that children can see how quickly they and their friends are growing. Other opportunities for children to develop their maths skills are as they use socks, hanging from the 'washing line' in the living room for matching and pairing. The childminder's excellent interaction with children aids the development of their communication skills and they use language confidently and imaginatively. Children's skills in mark-making are also developed as they have independent access to writing materials and use these frequently.

Children's emotional development is strongly promoted as they develop secure, trusting relationships with the childminder and with each other. Their behaviour is exemplary and they show an excellent awareness for each other. Children engage in a wide range of activities and experiences which helps them to truly value diversity and understand the cultures and beliefs of others. They celebrate a range of festivals and good use is made of resources, such as, books and posters which are displayed to provide positive images of the world around us. Children are encouraged to ask questions and are offered appropriate explanations. The childminder's thoughtful planning means that children participate in activities that enable them to develop skills for their future. Children show an excellent understanding of the relevance of following good personal hygiene routines and this is further promoted by the use of individual hand towels.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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