

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY344544
Inspection date	25/01/2011
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
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. She lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 18 in Letchworth, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a first floor bedroom for children requiring undisturbed rest. Children have access to the fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools.

The childminder provides care on each weekday during term time and school holidays. 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 four children in this age group, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently two children on roll in this age group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are supported in making satisfactory progress as the childminder implements appropriate assessment procedures. She uses some of the information from assessment when planning activities and the provision of resources. The childminder has started to use self-evaluation, developing appropriate plans to address weaknesses and thereby demonstrating an effective capacity to improve the outcomes for children. Her effective partnerships with parents support her in gaining a clear understanding of each child's needs, ensuring that these are met and children are meaningfully included. Particular strengths are the childminder's good safety procedures, ensuring that children are protected and their welfare promoted.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the assessment and planning procedures to show how children's next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning in order to provide further experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development
- improve the systems for organisation of the setting by developing the use of self-evaluation to support ongoing improvements
- provide further opportunities for children to increase their awareness of the ways of life, cultures and beliefs of other people.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is consistently promoted because the childminder has attended additional training and has a good understanding of her responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. This is supported by a clear written procedure, enabling her to identify children at risk and take appropriate action. The childminder ensures that all household members have undergone appropriate suitability checks. Daily safety checks and comprehensive risk assessments help to ensure that children's safety is promoted. Good practice and ongoing explanations from the childminder help children to build up a thorough understanding of safety issues. For example, young children can explain how to use large play equipment at the park safely.

The childminder's sound policies support her in providing a childminding service which is inclusive to all children. For example, she has procedures to ensure that she works closely with parents. This enables her to gain appropriate knowledge of each child's background and needs. She is therefore able to offer children individual support, enabling them to make progress in their learning and development. The childminder maintains effective partnerships with parents, ensuring that they are aware of her practice, and children's care is consistent. Parents are adequately informed of their children's activities and progress through daily discussions with the childminder. Consistency of care is further promoted as the childminder has a clear understanding of the importance of maintaining links with other professionals. For example, she has procedures in place to exchange information with the local pre-school.

The childminder demonstrates an enjoyment of her work and is committed to making changes that will improve the outcomes for children. She informally evaluates her practice in order to gain a clear picture of her strengths and weaknesses and to implement changes to address these. For example, recent improvements include the purchase of additional toys and resources, thereby offering children further choices and play opportunities. However, the self-evaluation process is not fully utilised to inform the overall review of daily practice and to evaluate the impact of any changes made. Children's learning and development are supported as the childminder makes efficient use of space and resources. For example, toys are generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. The childminder also uses community resources, such as, local parks, children's centres and toddler groups, in order to offer children additional opportunities.

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

Children make satisfactory progress in their learning as the childminder has a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She observes children as they play, assessing some of this to help inform activity planning and thereby provide activities which support children's development. However, this is not fully promoted because the assessment and planning procedures do not show how

children's next developmental steps are consistently fed into the overall planning. Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe and secure. They move around the home, selecting resources independently and playing happily on their own or with other children and the childminder. They are therefore beginning to play an active role in their learning and are developing positive attitudes to this.

The childminder's appropriate interaction with children helps them to develop their vocabulary. For example, when children choose to look at books, the childminder encourages them to name the different types of fish, introducing new words such as 'starfish' and 'seal'. Children's development is promoted as the childminder joins in appropriately with their play. For example, children playing with soft bricks are encouraged to try balancing these on their heads, counting how long they can do this for. Children's learning is further extended as the childminder makes some use of incidental learning opportunities. For example, when children notice their shadows on a sunny day, the childminder explains the reason for this and the children understand that when there is no sun they are unable to see the shadows.

The childminder makes appropriate use of children's interests to help promote their development. For example, children interested in cars are encouraged to name the different colours and compare the sizes of the cars as they play. Children are encouraged to solve simple problems and begin to develop their knowledge of basic mathematical language. For example, when playing with bricks, children count as they build and talk about which towers are the tallest and smallest. The childminder's effective organisation means that children are offered additional weekly opportunities which help to promote their learning. For example, they interact with their peers as they participate in activities when they attend toddler groups.

Children gain skills for the future and increase their knowledge of the uses of information and communication technology as they access an appropriate range of resources. For example, young children use interactive toys and keyboards. They are offered an effective range of opportunities to be active and develop physical skills and coordination, for example, through participating in action rhymes and using large play equipment at the park. Appropriate daily practice helps to develop children's awareness of healthy lifestyles. For example, they wash their hands before eating, discussing the importance of washing the germs away.

The childminder talks with children about behaviour and encourages them to play together and to share the resources. This supports them in developing a sound understanding of behaviour and thereby gaining further skills for the future. Children's understanding of diversity is developing as they access relevant resources, such as, books and role play items, which give positive images and information. However, their wider awareness of the ways of life and beliefs of other people is not extended and fully promoted. The childminder's effective partnerships with parents enable her to gather relevant information in order to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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