

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY346629
Inspection date	24/03/2011
Inspector	Maura Pigram
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 2007 and has a Level 3 qualification in childcare. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and seven years in Watford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and a bedroom is used for sleep and rest. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. There are currently two children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. 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.

The childminder knows each child well which enables her to meet their individual learning and development needs. She plans her time and the environment carefully to ensure children enjoy a worthwhile range of experiences that support their learning. She works closely with parents and they share valuable information that promotes children's welfare. She liaises with other providers where children attend to ensure consistency of care. She reflects on her practice and recognises how to bring about improvement that benefits the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning so that children's play and learning experiences is based on their interests and needs, and use observations to plan the next steps in a child's developmental progress
- review the risk assessment so that it covers everything a child comes into contact with particular reference to linens such as bedding.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her role in safeguarding children which promotes children's welfare. She ensures parents are aware of her role in child protection before they place their children in her care.

She has effective contingency plans in place to ensure children are cared for by a suitable person in the event of an emergency. The resources and premises are safe and she has carried out a full risk assessment for the home, garden and outings. However, fresh bed linen is not always provided on her own families beds when children are having a rest. This potentially compromises children's hygiene practices and understanding. A comfortable home environment is provided where are treated as part of the family. Since the last inspection the childminder has developed her garden and the play space available. Children now enjoy playing along the decking as well as the grassed area. The wide range of good quality resources are easily available and are suitable for the children's age and stage of development. The childminder knows the children well which allows her to plan for different abilities and preferences in their learning styles. Good use is made of childminding network where ideas for good practice are shared. Her experience in a day care setting means she is aware of what children can learn from activities offered. She keeps up to date with training and attends relevant short courses such as 'Every Child a Talker' and 'Sensory Play'. In addition, she reads articles received from the National Childminding Association. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. For example, parents are now fully aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about the service provided.

The childminder carefully maintains all required documentation and has a detailed set of policies and procedures. A parent pack is provided which includes a full copy of these so they can refer to them at any time. The information gathered and discussed with parents includes details regarding all aspects of children's care and learning needs. She uses a daily diary as well as informal feedback to ensure continuity of care. Parents are very pleased with the care provided and are happy to recommend the childminder's services to others. Positive comments include 'provides a home from home childcare experience'. She liaises with other providers to ensure progression and continuity of care and learning for individuals. Her self-evaluation includes parents and children's views. She has highlighted her strengths and some areas to improve such as developing her knowledge on helping more active learners achieve as much as they can.

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

The childminder knows the children very well and their individual personalities which means they are settled and secure. As a result they are confident and relaxed in the childminder's home. They enjoy their play together in a comfortable environment where they have plenty of free choice and many opportunities to develop new skills. They enjoy warm relationships with the childminder. Children learn acceptable behaviour because the childminder sets clear boundaries and explains the reasons for her requests. Skills for the future such as turn taking are effectively supported. Praise and encouragement promote children's self-esteem and ensure they develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning.

Planning is based on quarterly themes, it is flexible and covers all areas of learning. The childminder introduces topics such as, 'Spring and baby animals'. Each topic incorporates an individual action plan for each child which is linked to each area of learning. This ensures the next steps in children's learning are identified. However, some activities chosen such as colouring and drawing within lines do not always link to children's interests and individual development needs. Children particularly enjoy helping themselves to the character resources. They play imaginatively with the wide range of figures and animals. Good interaction during imaginative play activities means that children's emerging language skills are well supported. The wide range of books both fiction and non-fiction are easily available. Children visit the library during the holidays and are encouraged to choose books according to their interests. This encourages reading for pleasure and reading for information and meaning. In addition, the childminder is in the process of developing story sacks so that children's participation in favourite stories is further developed. The childminder has some knowledge of baby sign so that younger children or those with limited language skills can effectively communicate their needs. All activities are adapted or modified so that all children can fully participate. They learn about the wider world through attending age-appropriate groups within the local community and by taking part in purposeful activities. For example, recently children made objects such as masks related to Chinese New Year, they discussed their birthdays and the various animals associated with the Chinese calendar. This means that children's knowledge of how other people live and celebrate festivals is supported.

Children enjoy ample opportunities to engage in physical activities both indoors and outdoors. This supports their understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. For example, they play in the garden and regularly visit local parks where they enjoy plenty of fresh air. In addition, they regularly socialise with other minded children at the local nature reserve. During this time they engage in a wide selection of age-appropriate activities such singing art and craft activities, songs and picnics. Children know how to keep safe both indoors and outdoors as effective safety measures are taken. Well organised routines help younger children feel secure and confident in the childminders home.

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	2
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

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	3
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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