

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/11/2011
Inspector	Linda Bird
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. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and seven years in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. The childminder is registered to care for no more than four children under eight years of age and currently has this amount of children on roll. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding purposes and there is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is willing to drop off and collect children from pre-schools and nurseries in the local area. She takes children to the library, as well as the local farm and playgroup. There are two pet guinea pigs in the setting. 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.

The childminder has a clear understanding of the individual needs of each child enabling her to successfully promote the children's welfare and learning. The children benefit from a wide variety of outings and enjoy their play in the setting. Children are safe, secure and settled because they are carefully supervised. The partnerships with parents, the local school and playgroup, together with weekly visits to the farm are a key strength and these links enhance the learning and development of the children. The children's good progress is generally well supported by the childminder's use of observations and assessments. An effective self-evaluation process helps to identify priorities for change.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the use of observations and assessments to identify learning priorities for each child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded effectively because the childminder has a secure knowledge of possible signs of abuse and the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child in her care. The childminder has attended appropriate training on safeguarding. The children are well supervised at all times. The adults in the setting are appropriately vetted and are safe and suitable to work with

young children. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place. These are shared effectively with parents and are implemented well to promote the safe and smooth running of the setting. Systems for carrying out regular risk assessments are in place and as a result, practical changes have been made. The childminder has successfully completed paediatric first aid training. The recommendations raised at the last inspection which related to safeguarding have been fully addressed. The overall impact of the safeguarding improvements and the careful supervision ensure that children feel safe and secure in the setting.

The childminder is knowledgeable about the Early Year's Foundation Stage and uses this knowledge well to support children in their learning. The environment is well organised and best use is made of the space available. Equipment and toys are stored in plastic boxes with pictures on the front showing the contents, the children are then able to select their own resources. The childminder has recently joined the toy library and this has increased the range and variety of resources available to the children. Children achieve well as a result of the wide range of resources which support their learning.

The childminder has a detailed self-evaluation which identifies priorities for the future. She is aware of her own strengths and weaknesses and continually looks for ways to improve provision for the children. She has attended a wide range of courses, including 'Every Child a Talker'. This training has improved her knowledge and skills to the benefit the children. Consequently, outcomes for children are good.

Relationships with parents are excellent. The parents are extremely positive about the setting, it is clear that parents highly value the setting and appreciate the way in which their children benefit from being there. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's well-being and development. The childminder is proactive in seeking parents' views and then adjusting provision to meet the their wishes for individual children. There are effective links with the local school, for example, when one of the children was starting pre-school, home visits took place at the setting, as well as the child's home and this helped to contribute to a smooth transition.

The setting promotes equality and diversity and caters for children from a range of different backgrounds. The childminder has a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. She helps the children to consider their own attitudes towards people who are different to themselves and she helps children to gain knowledge about different cultures. Each child is seen as an individual with particular needs and interests and the individual needs of children are met. Consequently, children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can.

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

The childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. She plans carefully to meet the full range of the experiences of the Early Years curriculum. A system for making and recording

observations of the children's development is in place, but this approach does not include the identification of the next steps in each child's learning. As a result, children are less well challenged in some areas and do not always make progress to their full potential. This is a relative weakness in the otherwise good provision.

The children enjoy the activities that they engage in and will persist in their play and concentrate for extended periods of time. They enjoy playing with toy animals and are helped to extend their vocabulary by learning the names of less familiar animals. Children are confident in handling books and particularly enjoy identifying birds and animals, for example, through using a big colourful book. The children have plenty of opportunities to try out their early writing and drawing skills. The provision in the setting contributes effectively to the development of communication, language and literacy. The children's knowledge of the natural world around them is stimulated well through a range of opportunities and experiences outside of the home. For example, children go on regular visits to the local farm and enjoy watching the animals. The children are developing good mathematical skills. They can count securely up to 10 and are beginning to count larger numbers. This is because the childminder takes every opportunity to encourage the children to count as part of their play. The children are provided with a good balance of both indoor and outdoor play that fosters active learning. They enjoy play with large soft equipment and music and movement activities which are held at the playgroup. This means that the children's physical skills in running, jumping and balancing are developing well. The children are also developing good skills for the future. For example, the children's current interest and knowledge about books will help to build a foundation for later literacy skills.

Children are secure and feel happy and confident in the setting. They are able to make choices and select what they want to play with as independence is encouraged. Children behave very well in the setting, this is because the childminder takes the time to talk issues through with the children and explain to them why certain behaviour is not appropriate. Warm and trusting relationships are developed between the childminder and the children. The childminder takes careful and sensitive steps to provide experiences that help the children to develop a positive and confident sense of themselves and others, and foster a positive disposition to learn.

The children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to maintain good personal hygiene. The setting has a large soap dispenser which was purchased to encourage children to wash their hands after going to the toilet. The children are offered fresh fruit for their mid-morning snack and drinking water is readily available, which they know is good for them. The children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs. Children are protected from cross contamination and infection through effective procedures that are carefully adhered to. Children participate in fire drills and therefore learn to stay safe in an emergency.

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	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	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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