

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/09/2009
Inspector	Susan Parker
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 2007. She lives with her partner and three children aged one, three and 11 in the village of Codicote, Hertfordshire. Access to the home is via a small step to the door. The family has two guinea pigs, two fish and one dog. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully secured rear garden for outside play. The childminder may care for no more than four children under eight years at any one time, of whom not more than one may be in the early year's age range. She is currently minding one child in this age range on a part-time basis. She also offers care to children over five years to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks or drives to local schools to take and collect children and she visits the local toddler groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder gains a sound understanding of each child's individual needs which ensures that she promotes all aspects of children's welfare, learning and development. Children's safety and security are a priority and the children are learning healthy habits and how to keep themselves safe while exploring the local community and wider world. The partnership with parents and the local pre-school is developing adequately which is significant in ensuring that the individual and diverse needs of all children are met. This benefits the children who make steady progress, given their age, ability and starting points. The childminder has actively sought training and advice to improve her provision, and is developing a system of self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systematic observations and assessments to identify learning priorities
- further develop the written risk assessment to include trips and outings outside the home
- further develop the system of self-evaluation in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the provision.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is developing the organisation and documentation of her provision which adequately supports the welfare and learning of the children. The childminder is effective in her organisation of the individual care and learning for

each child. She knows each child well and documents their needs and routines in partnership with the parents. Robust safeguarding policies, effective daily practice, and a commitment to training ensures that children are safe and well protected. She has a sound understanding of child protection and is committed to promoting children's safety at all times. This includes teaching the children to play safely and be aware of possible hazards. The childminder provides a wide selection of creative and imaginative activities, visits and outings enable the children to practice their skills and explore their environment safely.

Children make steady progress in this setting where the childminder provides a range of toys, equipment and resources which stimulate the children's interests and natural curiosity. However, the childminder has not fully evaluated her setting to highlight the strengths and areas for improvement. Parents and carers receive regular information regarding their children's welfare and developmental achievements. This includes a portfolio containing information on the childminders experience and a written set of policies and procedures.

The childminder is committed to developing the welfare and learning of every child attending. Children's individual and diverse needs are recorded and met. Regular observations of the children and the caring relationships formed ensure that she understands each child's likes and dislikes. However, these observations are not fully effective in assessing their progress and matching the observations to the expectations of the early learning goals. Children are able to access for themselves, a range of good quality toys and resources that are age appropriate and in excellent condition.

Any accidents are recorded and the home checked daily for hazards. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate and has an awareness of keeping children safe; she regularly assesses the home environment and takes appropriate precautions to keep children from harm. Through the childminder, the children are learning responsible habits, for example, washing their hands before eating, disposing of tissues hygienically, and that fresh air and exercise are healthy.

The childminder is effective in working in partnership with the parents, other settings and other professionals. Through this effective partnership, she ensures that she has a sound knowledge of each child's individuality and is able to fully include them in all activities.

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

Children enjoy their time in this provision where their individual welfare and developmental needs are met. The childminder knows each child well and is able to provide them with interesting and exciting games, resources and activities which stimulate their natural curiosity and imagination. However, the recording of the children's progress is not fully effective in identifying the extent of the learning and development attained at this provision. Children are safe and secure in this provision. They are adopting healthy habits. For example, choosing to use a stool to reach the sink to wash hands before eating.

Children have regular access to outdoor play, and are always dressed appropriately for the weather. The garden has a selection of large equipment for children to develop their physical skills. They mix with other children frequently, and are establishing their social skills and forming friendships. This is active in promoting children's feelings of self-esteem, confidence and independence.

Children's language and communication is actively promoted. Children are encouraged to be social, share resources and wait for their turn. They are encouraged to think critically as the childminder asks them appropriate questions about what they are doing and what may happen next. They are developing their vocabulary every day through sharing books and talking about their experiences. Children are forming a good understanding of problem solving and numeracy; they recognise shapes very well and are able to use their knowledge in everyday activities. For example, painting with small watercolours enabled the children to use smaller brushes and explore delicate strokes. Children's mathematical thinking is promoted as an integral part of all activities such as counting cars, recognising colours and familiar numerals. They are learning about the world around them through mixing in the local community, and exploring the similarities and differences in other cultures and religions.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	3
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

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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	3
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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