

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/06/2011
Inspector	Angela 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 was registered in 2007. She lives with her husband and children aged 13 and 14 years. Her husband is also a registered childminder and at times they work together. They live close to the town centre of Bolton, Greater Manchester. There are shops, parks, schools and public transport links in the vicinity. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding, with two bedrooms on the first floor available to provide overnight care. There is also a ground floor basement room which has been converted to provide play space for supervised activities. An enclosed area to the side of the property allows outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently two children in the early years age group on roll. When working with her co-childminder, together they may care for a maximum of 12 children, six of whom may be in the early years age range. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder supports children with English as an additional language. She holds an early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification Level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Outcomes for children are good because the childminder has a clear understanding of the requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage and provides an inclusive environment where every child's needs and backgrounds are respected. Children settle well because they are cared for in a nurturing environment where good communication with parents identifies children's needs and supports their developmental progress. The childminder effectively supports each child's learning. She provides a broad range of interesting play opportunities in a stimulating playroom and uses some suitable systems to plan for their learning journeys. The childminder is committed to continual development and has made some significant improvements since her last inspection. She has a clear understanding of her strengths and has appropriate plans for the future which will further develop the quality of the provision for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen planning for children's learning by matching observations to the expectations of early learning goals and using information from observation and assessment to identify priorities and plan relevant experiences across all areas of learning

- extend further the range of methods used to help children communicate and develop their skills in English
- record the details of evacuation drills undertaken, including details of any problems encountered and how they were resolved.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective arrangements for safeguarding children's welfare are in place. The childminder has attended safeguarding training with the local authority and she suitably understands issues in relation to child protection, such as possible indicators of abuse. She has produced and implemented a range of associated policies and procedures, which are aligned with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. All adults in contact with children have been suitably vetted and the childminder checks the identification of visitors to the home. The childminder gives priority to ensuring children's safety. She is vigilant and conducts regular risk assessments of the premises, and therefore children play safely in her home. Fire safety is clearly planned for and emergency escape routes are occasionally rehearsed, although a record of such practices is not maintained. Children's health and well-being are positively promoted. Clear procedures regarding accidents and medication are in place and relevant documentation is kept. The childminder implements appropriate procedures to prevent the spread of infection and provides activities and routines which promote healthy and safe lifestyles.

The childminder provides a welcoming service that is responsive to individual needs. She is respectful of different family backgrounds and home languages used and she helps children understand the world they live in by providing some positive images of diversity in play materials. She makes the most of community links to provide better outcomes for children. For example, she links with other childminders and makes use of the children's centres to extend her network for information sharing and also to provide children with a broader range of experiences. Space within the home is used very effectively. The rear lounge is dedicated to providing a welcoming, play-based learning environment where children access a good range of well-planned play opportunities and resources.

Positive relationships with parents, along with the childminder's flexible working arrangements, ensure the needs of each child and family are met. Parents are given good quality written information regarding the childminder's provision. They are kept up-to-date with their children's progress through their daily verbal discussions, parents information boards and monthly meetings to look at and discuss children's learning journey records. Parents value the photographs taken of their child engaged in activities and showing their development. The childminder suggests ways they can help their child progress further, particularly where children are learning English as a second language. She demonstrates a strong understanding of working in partnership with other professionals and has linked with key workers when collecting children from nursery sessions in order to discuss plans for children's learning priorities.

The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to continuing her professional

development to enhance the quality of care and education provided. Since her last inspection she has achieved an early years qualification and attended a good number of training sessions relating to good childminding practice. She is proactive in sharing information and ideas with other childminders and enthusiastically puts what she has seen or learned into practice. Visits to other settings to observe good childcare practice and organisation are also used to drive improvement. For example, a recent visit resulted in the reorganisation of the playroom into dedicated areas of learning, creating cosy areas and sensory provision, and providing a more accessible environment for children.

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

Children display a strong sense of security in the childminder's care and are very familiar with their routines. They have strong attachments to the childminder and her husband and refer to them using endearing names. They snuggle in closely when they are tired and are cared for affectionately. As a result, children develop nurturing tendencies and show care and concern for the younger children present. Their self-esteem is developing well as the relationships with their childminder are highly positive. They receive praise and encouragement continually. They know that they are valued as they have a permanent place in the childminder's home for their own belongings and for their photographs, which they see displayed. Children feel safe to move around independently and they take part in activities which help them learn about keeping themselves safe, such as learning about road safety when they are out in the community. They learn about being healthy through good routines which promote healthy lifestyles. Mealtimes are well organised and used as a positive occasion of social sharing. Consequently, children enjoy this part of their routine and they are very well nourished. The childminder uses star charts to encourage children to eat a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables, promoting their 'five a day'.

The childminder's secure knowledge of how children learn through play, along with the learning, development and welfare requirements, promote good outcomes for the children. The welcoming, play-centred organisation of the childminder's home successfully promotes active learning. Children freely access a wide range of good quality play materials which the childminder routinely extends based on children's current stages of development and the things which interest them, and to support the current learning priorities. Consequently, children are able to direct their own play and follow through their own ideas, thus becoming independent thinkers and learners. They find their own belongings, such as their personal hand towel hanging in the bathroom, and they retrieve particular toys they want to play with from low-level storage in the playroom. Children's independence is further fostered through the provision of ground floor, accessible toilet facilities where they meet their own personal needs well.

The childminder devotes her time to playing with the children and she speaks continually with them in play, labelling items to extend some children's vocabulary and asking questions of others whose language skills are further developed. As a result, children are making some good progress in the development of their

communication, language and literacy. A wealth of attractive materials promote the children's interest in words and pictures. They look at books with interest as they relax in the cosy corner underneath the floating canopy, which creates a communication-friendly space. Children make marks in different ways, using the wall-mounted wipe board, chalk board or accessible pencils and paper. They also explore marks made in dough and with paints. The childminder respects children's home languages and has learned some words herself to help her identify and meet children's needs. She reaffirms children's understanding using their first language and repeats in English consistently to help their language acquisition. Children rely, however, on her interpretation of their words and, as yet, she has not explored other ways to help children communicate and learn English. Children's mathematical development is promoted spontaneously in play and everyday routines. They show interest and concentrate well while posting shapes in the sorters and they count out the number of balls in their bucket. Opportunities to explore and investigate are provided routinely. Children explore the garden and the natural world outside on a daily basis. They experiment with battery-operated toys, learning which buttons to press to achieve a desired effect, and the childminder provides a range of sensory play opportunities, such as natural materials on a play tray or silks to feel and wear. As a result of these types of opportunities, children develop the skills they need for the future securely.

Activities are well matched to children's learning needs because the childminder knows them very well. She observes and evaluates children's learning clearly. She uses what she knows to inform a monthly summative assessment report and to identify next steps for children's development. This forms a profile of the progress they are making and gives her a clear focus on which to plan activities and play opportunities. However, she does not yet systematically use her observations to assess and track children's achievements across the different aspects of each area of learning in order to help her more quickly identify gaps in both achievement and provision for children's learning. Consequently, children make better progress in some areas of learning than others.

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

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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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