

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	04/02/2010
Inspector	Kim Wailling
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 lives with her husband and two adult children in Park Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the house and the first floor main bedroom and bathroom are used for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. There is level access to the premises.

The childminder was registered in 2009 on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for three children in the early years age range and three children over five years. She is currently caring for three in the early years age range on a part-time basis. No overnight care is offered.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are making satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning as they are offered age-appropriate experiences and activities. Their individual needs are known and met as the childminder has a very good partnership with parents. Policies that support inclusion are in place. Children are kept safe as the childminder has an informed understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues. The childminder is beginning to develop procedures that support self-evaluation and sustain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for further development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has an informed understanding of how to protect children from harm. She has ensured that checks have been carried out regarding the suitability of any person living within her home which is made available for parents to see. All safeguarding children reporting procedures are kept easily available and are shared with parents.

Children's care, learning and welfare are well promoted because the childminder puts the individual needs of children in her care first. She has developed good working relationships with the children's parents so that information about children's health, development and progress is effectively shared. Ample information is available to parents about the service the childminder offers and

how she organises her childminding day. For example, the childminder issues an attractive newsletter for parents which reports on outings and special activities such as a trip to see Father Christmas, which the children had undertaken. In addition, the childminder spends time with the children's parents to discuss aspects of the children's well-being such as helping the children to adjust to the transition from home into the childminder's care. The childminder also ensures that she liaises with the children's schools and, where applicable learning support assistants, so that children are offered continuity of care. This is strength of the setting.

The childminder has a sound understanding of what constitutes an inclusive service for children which is evident in her planning and child assessment systems. The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and recognises children's individual skills and abilities. For example, children's interests are encouraged and any achievement, no matter how small, is celebrated. The childminder is beginning to evaluate her practice and has a general understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of her provision. However, she has not yet assessed or graded the effectiveness of her current childcare practice to help her sustain continuous improvement.

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

Children are offered a well thought out range of experiences and adult-led activities which cover all areas of learning. For example, themes such as 'Under the Sea' are used to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world. These themes are supported by interactive displays which the childminder creates in her family home. In addition, children can easily access favourite toys, both indoors and in the childminder's garden, and play contentedly. Children clearly enjoy the childminder's company and that of her student daughter who is currently studying towards a degree in early years education.

Observation and assessment systems effectively help the childminder plan the next steps in children's learning. For example, for children in the early years age group, assessment is linked clearly to the early years learning goals so that the childminder has a good overall picture of each child's progress. As a result she is able to identify a younger child's need for additional support and take appropriate action. For example, children who are experiencing communication and language delay are helped to join in the play of others.

Attention is given to promoting children's health. The childminder ensures that children are provided with meals and snacks that are healthy, balanced and nutritious. In addition, younger children are taken to an 'Active Kids' group held at a local Children's Centre where they are encouraged to part in an age-appropriate activity sessions run by a fitness coach. Children's safety is given consideration at all times and a comprehensive risk assessment is effectively used to manage potential risks. In addition, the childminder is very attentive to the children in her care and they are kept in sight and hearing at all times.

Overall, the childminder has created a happy and well resourced environment for children of all ages in her family home. Children are secure and know what is expected of them. Children are content in the childminder's care and consequently make progress in all aspects of their learning and development.

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	2

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	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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