

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY393543
Inspection date	14/01/2010
Inspector	Jane Mount
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 June 2009. She lives with her husband and three children who are aged eight years, five years and one year. The property is situated in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire and is close to local amenities such as shops, parks and schools. The whole of the childminder's home is registered for childminding purposes although the ground floor is mainly used for childminding purposes. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play and overnight care is not included in the registration. The family have two cats, two rabbits, a guinea pig and a tank of goldfish.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years. The childminder is currently minding six children, four of whom are in the early years age range. Children attend on a part-time basis.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and a local childminding group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides effectively for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children are treated as individuals as the childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are fully met. Children share warm friendly relationships with the childminder and are happy and secure in her care. They are provided with a varied range of play and learning experiences which ensure they make good progress in their learning and development. Children are safeguarded and their welfare needs are met through the childminder's sound practice and the implementation of some highly effective policies and procedures. Documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the setting is all in place and well-organised. Processes for monitoring the setting to ensure continuous improvement, such as self-evaluation, are in the early stages of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of a system, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend effective practice and to ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is fully protected as the childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children. For example, she is familiar with the child protection procedures to follow should she have a concern including the correct recording and reporting procedures. The childminder has an informative safeguarding policy in place which is shared with parents. She has also undertaken a safeguarding course and is planning on completing further training in the near future to consolidate her learning. All household members have had relevant background checks completed. Children's safety is paramount and the childminder has been pro-active in ensuring appropriate measures are in place to maintain children's safety. For example, she closely supervises children and a written risk assessment details how potential hazards in the home and in the garden and on outings, are minimised to keep children safe. On-going visual assessments are effective in ensuring the environment remains safe and children are fully protected at all times.

The childminder has worked hard to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the EYFS and this is reflected in her practice. Documentation is well-organised and informative policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of children. Children's care, learning and welfare are promoted because the childminder puts the individual needs of each of the children in her care first. Children benefit from a childminder who understands the importance of continuous professional development and she attends appropriate short courses and workshops whenever possible to ensure she keeps up-to-date with current childcare practices. This is the childminder's first inspection since registering and she is aware of her key strengths and areas for further development with some processes already in place to monitor the effectiveness of her practice. For example, she seeks feedback from parents and she has plans to find out children's views also. A system of self-evaluation to more closely monitor the childminder's practice is in the early stages of development.

Resources are accessible and developmentally appropriate with the daily routine planned to ensure all children are fully included and their individual needs are met. The childminder works hard to provide an inclusive environment. For example, she values and appreciates the children and their families and welcomes them into her home. Parents are provided with good quality information. For example, a portfolio is available and parents are fully aware of the settings policies and procedures. Useful information gained from parents at the initial meeting is used by the childminder to plan and provide care and learning that meets each child's specific needs. Effective settling-in procedures designed to meet the needs of individual children and their families ensure children settle well and feel at home in the childminding environment. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's care, progress and achievements as information is effectively exchanged on a daily basis. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude and awareness to liaising with other early years settings delivering the EYFS to ensure continuity in children's care and learning and has plans to implement systems in the future.

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

Children are making good progress in their learning and development as the childminder knows the children in her care well and she uses this information to effectively support their learning. For example, she has implemented effective observation and assessment systems which show children's achievements and how they are progressing. This information is then used by the childminder to plan the next steps in children's learning. Planning is informative and designed to cater for each child which ensures children receive an enjoyable experience and all children are fully included. The childminder understands that every child is unique and works closely with parents to find out about and to meet children's individual needs. She uses the EYFS framework to ensure children experience a varied range of play experiences which effectively cover the six areas of learning. Experiences are led by children's interests and provide some challenge and consequently, children are motivated in their play and enjoy their learning. They participate in a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated play with the indoor and outdoor environments used to fully promote children's play and learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted. For example, regular visits to toddler groups enhances children's opportunities to develop social skills and to become more creative and independent thinkers. From an early age children are encouraged to make decisions and take responsibility for choosing some of the activities they play with as the environment is organised with most resources at child height and easily accessible. Children develop secure attachments and share warm, friendly relationships with the childminder and consequently, are happy and secure in her care. Children are learning through activities that engage all their senses and regularly participate in music, rhymes and songs which all help to promote their language development. Regular story times also supports their language and communication skills. For example, the childminder engages children in conversation when reading stories. Children are able to express themselves creatively and regularly participate in art and craft activities and use a varied range of mediums such as painting, play dough and cutting and sticking. For example, older children enjoy making necklaces while younger children enjoy the sensory experience of finger painting. The childminder uses the daily routine to incorporate children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. For example, children enjoy counting milk bottles when walking to school and when cooking learn how to weigh the ingredients. The childminder promotes a positive awareness of diversity and children are beginning to gain some understanding about the wider world. For example, through discussion and some activities children learn about other countries, cultures and religions. Also, resources help children develop positive attitudes to others. Children have opportunities to learn about the local community through regular outings such as walks along the canal to feed the ducks. Children learn about the environment such as observing wildlife and nature and discussing the importance of recycling.

Effective strategies are implemented by the childminder to promote children's health and to safeguard their welfare. Children's health is protected with good

hygiene policies and procedures in place to ensure the risk of cross-infection is minimised. For example, the childminder has a clear sickness policy she follows if children are unwell. Children learn how to stay healthy and about personal care routines to keep themselves healthy. For example, they discuss the importance of hand washing before eating and after visiting the toilet to prevent the spread of germs and a poster displayed in the toilet is used as a visual reminder to children of ways to keep themselves healthy. Children develop a positive attitude towards being active as they are encouraged to develop their physical skills while learning that exercise can be fun. For example, they enjoy regular walks and a variety of resources in the garden encourage children's physical development. Healthy eating is promoted and children receive a nutritious, balanced diet. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure children's individual dietary needs are catered for and children take an active role in helping to choose the menu. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy eating as they are provided with a variety of healthy food choices. Through discussion and some activities they learn the benefits of eating healthy foods. For example, during the summer the children enjoyed picking and eating fruits and vegetables from the garden such as beans, strawberries, tomatoes and cucumbers. Effective methods are used to encourage children to eat a healthy diet. For example, children receive stickers which they enjoy putting on their place mats if they eat their vegetables at meal times. Children develop high levels of self-esteem and a sense of achievement as positive behaviour is promoted with regular praise and encouragement from the childminder. Children's behaviour is managed well with clear and consistent boundaries set by the childminder through the use of simple house rules. For example, children are familiar with the rules to follow when they want to play on the trampoline in the garden. Through regular discussion children learn to respect and co-operate with others. The childminder is a positive role model and secure relationships between the childminder and children enable children to feel safe and valued in the childminding environment. Children's safety is protected and they are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, when out walking they discuss road safety and children know it is important to hold the childminder's hand or the buggy. The childminder has an emergency fire plan in place which she has practised with the children and therefore children learn how 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

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