

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/12/2009
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 2009. She lives with her husband and one child aged one year in Hertford in Hertfordshire, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two 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 is also registered to care for children over five years to 11 years. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development. Their individual needs are met and they are learning to keep themselves healthy and safe. The childminder has been effective in forming some partnerships which adequately supports coherence of learning and development related to the children's experiences at home. The introduction of a self-evaluation of the childminder's practice has enabled her to reflect on the quality of some aspects of her work.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the evaluation of the effectiveness of the setting and the impact on the outcomes for children
- develop partnership working to include other settings that children attend.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. Her robust policies, procedure and practice are fully consistent with the latest guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The childminder regularly assesses any risks that the children may come into contact with and she takes appropriate precautions to minimise these.

The childminder gains a good understanding of each child's needs through observations, daily diaries and regular discussions with parents and carers. She has developed a good partnership with parents. They are encouraged to contribute to the assessment of their child's progress by completing 'Wow' slips which effectively records children's achievements at home. The childminder has formed professional

partnerships with other childminders, however, links with other settings are limited. She has gained a good knowledge and understanding of each of the children's abilities, interests and backgrounds and is effective in promoting equal opportunities which ensures that all children are fully included in all activities.

The childminder has a good range of toys, equipment and resources which are age appropriate and are used as effective learning tools. Community resources are used well. For example, children benefit from attending the local toy library and toddler groups where they are developing their social skills and can access further opportunities and activities which support their good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are learning to share, take turns and to use tools safely. Through positive behaviour management strategies such as praising the children for their achievements, the childminder successfully promotes children's confidence and self-esteem. She uses gentle reminders to promote children's understanding of right and wrong. Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe while participating in the activities on offer.

The childminder has begun an evaluation of her practice which has successfully highlighted her good practice, although it is not fully effective in identifying areas for improvement. She is dedicated to increasing her knowledge and training and has high ambitions to continue to improve the care and learning she provides.

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

The warm and welcoming environment is safe and accessible for children. They can choose from a good range of activities and resources which reflects the children's backgrounds and the wider world. This is effective in making the children feel that they belong in this setting. The childminder has a good knowledge of how children learn through play. She uses a variety of teaching methods to motivate the children's curiosity and interest. Children make good progress in this setting where they are establishing good personal care skills such as putting on their own coat and washing their hands. They are given time and support to learn to dress themselves, get themselves a drink and to access a good range of toys and equipment. Each child's starting points are recorded and the childminder observes the children to gain a detailed knowledge of their capabilities and interests.

Children feel safe and secure in this setting where they learn how to avoid hurting themselves through clear explanations from the childminder. She ensures that the children are safe by evaluating and recording any possible risks or hazards that the children may come into contact with. Any trips or outings the children go on are fully risk assessed, all possible precautions are taken by the childminder to ensure that children can explore and learn in safe environments. Children are adopting healthy lifestyles, they understand that they must wash their hands after visiting the toilet, or messy play through gentle reminders and by observing the routines of the childminder. The children are provided with healthy meals and snacks, based on the five-a-day principle. Menus are planned in advance and take into account any dietary needs or preferences.

Children's communication skills are developing well. The childminder encourages the children to talk about the activities they are doing. Children have an avid interest in books, they listen to the stories, discuss what is happening in the pictures and are learning new words. They also greatly benefit from the childminders first language which is French. Even very young children are able to understand and speak in two languages. They are developing a good understanding of shapes and size as they stack cups in order of size. They count the steps and use rhymes to count and subtract, for example, five little monkeys, four little monkeys and so on.

Children's good health, safety and well-being are promoted by the secure knowledge of the childminder and the robust policies and procedures reflecting the childminder's practice. They are learning about the wider world and the life cycles of plants and animals. For example, they can see at first hand the changes to the trees as the seasons change.

Children's behaviour is managed sensitively. This promotes their feelings of self-esteem and it promotes children's confidence to try new challenges and achieve well in all areas of learning. Children are encouraged to choose their own toys and activities, and are given the time and encouragement to develop these.

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	3
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