

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/07/2010
Inspector	Gillian Sutherland
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 2009. She lives in Ellesmere Port with her partner and daughter aged sixteen months. The whole of the ground floor and two of the bedrooms upstairs are registered for childminding. There is a secure, fully enclosed garden and paved area for children's outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age group at any one time. Her partner is registered as her assistant and when working together the registration is for a total of five children under eight years old, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age group. There are currently two children under eight years old on roll. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for a maximum of two children under eight years old.

The childminder walks or drives to collect children from school and take them to places of interest. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and networks with other local childminders.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a very safe and welcoming environment, where children are settled and making good progress in their learning and development. The childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and information obtained from parents helps her to identify and meet children's individual needs. She works in partnership with parents and ensures that their child's learning journey is available to them at any time. The childminder has recently begun to identify not only her strengths in her childcare practices but has also areas for improvement within her setting.

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 self-evaluation to reflect on what has been accomplished so far and to maintain continuous improvement

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder ensures that her home is welcoming and children's welfare and safety are well protected through comprehensive risk assessments carried out on the areas at the setting which are accessed by the children and also on any outings they attend. Examples of the measures taken to ensure children are safe include the use of fire and cooker guards, protective corners fitted on tables and a

visitors book is used to record details of any visitors to the home and includes the times of arrival and departure plus the reason for the visit. The childminder has a good knowledge of the safeguarding procedures she would follow should she have any concerns about a child in her care and has a written safeguarding policy which fully complies with the requirements of Ofsted. Easily accessible to her are the contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and other appropriate agencies she may need to contact if she had any concerns about a child in her care.

Toys and resources are set out prior to children's arrival and the childminder ensures that all children have opportunities to participate in a varied range of supervised activities. Evidence of this was observed in practice during the inspection and is reflected in their personal learning journals. In this inclusive environment the childminder helps children to value different aspects of their own and other people's lives through discussion, activities and a range of resources that reflect positive images of the diverse needs not only of people in their local community but also those in the wider world. The childminder has a written equal opportunities policy which is fully implemented and the toys and resources are available to all; there is no gender bias.

An effective partnership with parents is established, and the childminder has received positive written feedback about the care provided. In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage, the childminder completes observations of the children participating in a varied range of activities, and these are recorded in the child's learning journey file and the next steps in the children's learning are identified. The childminder also begun to develop links with Early Years Foundation Stage providers in other settings where some of the children she cares for also attend. Written policies include ones on safeguarding, complaints, equal opportunities, special needs, managing behaviour, a missing child and uncollected children. As the childminder is registered to provide overnight care she has a policy regarding that aspect of the care provided. Parents sign to say that they are aware of the childminder's policies and procedures and the childminder is always happy to discuss these further with parents. The childminder is very committed to improving the quality of care she provides for children by attending additional training.

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

Children are very relaxed and settled in the care of the childminder and spend their time engaged in age-appropriate activities. The childminder's in-depth knowledge and understanding of their individual needs ensures that she is able to help the child develop to the best of their ability. The lounge and dining area are set out prior to children's arrival with a range of inviting resources which ensure that children are able to make good progress across the six areas of learning. Children in the different age groups enjoy their art and craft activities and they learn how to build models using empty boxes and cartons. They also enjoy free painting or colouring and here the children have access to a sturdy easel with a wipe on and off board and also a selection of different paints. The childminder supervises such activities and talks to them about the different works of art they

are creating. Children are closely supervised when they are accessing safety scissors and other small cutting tools which they competently use, further developing their small muscle development. The children are confident communicators who eagerly chatter with each other and to the childminder throughout the day. The childminder supports them as they participate in a varied range of activities, during which she engages them in conversation about the noise, shapes, colours and textures of the different resources they are using. For example, when the children were exploring the treasure basket they enjoyed the feel and texture of the different objects in it, including a piece of bubble wrap.

During their play the childminder encourages children to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts, such as simple calculation. For example, after they had planted their tomato plants they eagerly arrive at the childminder's and enjoy watering them and talking about the size of the tomatoes as they grow. This conversation is further developed as they talk about healthy eating and which foods are good for you and why. In a baking activity they learn how the consistencies of the ingredients change when liquids are added to the dry ingredients and then they have to calculate how much to put on the spoon to fill the baking cases with. Building towers are achieved by the children as there is a large set of well made blocks and wooden pieces of different shapes and sizes. Children learn how to count how many they can build before it begins to topple over and the childminder is always on hand to ensure other children's safety. Children have access to programmable toys and for the very young this means pressing various buttons on some of the toys and waiting to listen for the different sounds or movements created. The childminder allows children to self select the toys they wish to play with, although she was waiting for a step to arrive, allowing them to enter the toy shed independently. Children eagerly pursue activities either of their own choice or those led by the childminder and they confidently change the direction of their play and express their own ideas at any time during the day.

Children develop an awareness of good hygiene procedures as they go to the downstairs cloakroom to wash their hands after playing outside and always before snack and mealtimes. They learn how to dress themselves as they access a range of dressing up clothes or putting on their coats and outdoor shoes when going out for walks or enjoying wet weather play in the garden. The childminder has some house rules which, depending on the ages of the children, she helps them to follow and she is a very positive role model for the children, speaking courteously to them at all times.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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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