

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY401689
Inspection date	18/05/2010
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.

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 November 2009. She lives with her husband and three children aged eight, five and one year. The property is situated in North Watford, Hertfordshire and is within easy walking distance of local amenities such as parks, shops and schools. All areas of the premises are included in the registration, although the ground floor is generally used for childminding purposes. A first floor bedroom is available for younger children requiring a sleep during the day and toilet facilities are situated on the ground floor. There is a fully fenced rear garden available for outdoor play. The family have no pets and overnight care is not provided.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted 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 and of these two may be in the early years age range including one under one year. The childminder is currently caring for one child who is in the early years age group and who attends on a part-time basis.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Positive relationships with parents ensure children's individual needs are met and an inclusive and welcoming environment is provided. The childminder has high regard for the well-being of children and the implementation of some highly effective policies and procedures ensures children are safeguarded and their welfare is protected. Children feel at home in the childminding environment and share secure relationships with the childminder. They are making good progress in their learning and development because observation and assessment systems identify children's progress and achievements and this information is used when planning future play experiences. A process, such as self-evaluation, to closely monitor the quality of the provision to ensure continued improvement is 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 a quality improvement system, such as self-evaluation, to closely monitor and extend effective practice to ensure continued improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are secure and children's welfare is fully protected. For example, the childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection as she has completed a safeguarding children course and knows the procedures to follow if she did have a concern. Also, she has a written safeguarding policy in place, she has relevant publications and guidance leaflets which are easily accessible and all adults in the household are suitably checked. Children's safety is paramount and children are closely supervised by the childminder. Positive steps are taken to promote safety and to keep children safe. For example, the childminder ensures precautions are taken to prevent accidents such as using a socket covers and safety gates where appropriate and protectors are fitted to doors to prevent children's fingers being caught in the hinges. Written risk assessments are overall informative and detail how potential hazards are minimised to keep children safe. Also, ongoing visual assessments by the childminder are effective in ensuring the environment remains safe and children are fully protected throughout the day.

This is the childminder's first inspection since registering. She has worked hard to develop a secure knowledge of the framework and its requirements and this is reflected in her practice. Informative policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to promote children's well-being. Overall, documentation is well organised and the childminder understands the importance of confidentiality and takes appropriate steps to protect children. The childminder strives to provide a quality service. She understands the importance of professional development and is keen to continue to develop her practice. For example, she has completed a selection of early years courses and workshops since registering as a childminder. She has also identified further courses she wishes to complete in the future including undertaking a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 childcare qualification. The childminder is overall aware of her key strengths and the areas she wishes to develop. Some monitoring takes place to ensure the quality of the provision is good. For example, the childminder seeks feedback from parents and children through the completion of questionnaires. A system of self-evaluation to more closely monitor the childminder's practice to ensure continued improvement is in the early stages of development.

Children's care, learning and play are positively supported by a childminder who has good organisational skills. She ensures children's individual needs are met through organising her time and resources effectively. Resources are accessible and developmentally appropriate with the daily routine adjusted according to children's needs. The childminder welcomes the children in her care and their families into her home and she works hard to provide an inclusive environment. Partnerships with parents are good and effective settling-in procedures ensure children settle well and quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. Parents are provided with good quality information. For example, new and prospective parents receive a parent pack which includes details about the childminder and her policies and procedures. Children benefit from a two-way sharing of information between

the childminder and parents which ensures children's care and learning needs are fully supported. For example, daily diaries and contact notebooks are used to effectively share information between the childminder and parents. Also, a notice board and displays keep parents fully informed. The childminder works closely with parents to find out about and to meet children's individual developmental needs and parents are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude and awareness of liaising with other early years settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity in children's care and learning. For example, she has developed links with the local pre-school that children in her care attend. She ensures she finds out about future themes and topics children may participate in when at pre-school and then incorporates this information when she plans activities to fully promote the integration of care and education.

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge of child development and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. She has implemented observation and assessment systems which show children's achievements and progress over time. This information is then used to plan the next steps in children's learning with activities adapted to cater for individual children. Consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are learning to be confident and to have a positive attitude to learning because of the support they receive. Adult-led and child-initiated play are well balanced with the indoor and outdoor environments used to fully promote children's play and learning. Children participate in a varied range of play experiences which cover the six areas of learning and their personal, social and emotional development is positively encouraged. For example, children's independence is encouraged with the home environment organised with resources at child height and easily accessible. Children's communication skills are effectively supported by the childminder as she asks open-ended questions to extend and develop children's language through their play. Regular story times also support children's early communication skills and children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books with the childminder. They have regular opportunities to become familiar with the written word. For example, environment labels are used and children are encouraged to develop their writing skills through activities such as making shopping lists in role play. Children participate in activities that promote problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. For example, their counting skills are encouraged within the daily routine, such as counting the steps when climbing the slide steps at the park. Children's creative skills are encouraged and they have regular opportunities to experience a variety of art and craft activities and to use a varied range of mediums. For example, children recently enjoyed making ladybirds out of cardboard and decorating stones. Children develop a sense of belonging as their artwork is valued and some is displayed. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted through activities which look at their own and other cultures and countries as well as religions. Children learn about the local community, such as when they visit the local shop to buy fruit for snack time or outings to the library or a toddler group. Children learn about nature and the

environment. For example, they recently completed a topic on insects and particularly enjoyed going on a nature walk and finding a variety of creatures and learning about the lifecycle of a butterfly.

Effective strategies are implemented by the childminder to promote children's health and well-being with good hygiene practices in place to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Through discussion and effective support and guidance from the childminder, children learn the importance of personal care routines to keep themselves healthy. For example, they discuss the reasons for washing hands before eating or after playing in the garden to prevent the spread of germs. Posters situated by the sink in the downstairs toilet remind children to flush the toilet and to wash their hands and children are fully aware of which towel is theirs for hand drying. Children's physical development is actively encouraged as they have regular opportunities to practise and develop their physical skills. For example, children participate in music and movement sessions and delight in singing and dancing. They regularly visit the park where they enjoy running and climbing or playing on the slide and swing and in the garden, they also enjoy a variety of other physical activities. Children are provided with healthy and nutritious food choices and their dietary requirements are discussed regularly with parents. They eat a variety of healthy foods and through discussion learn about the benefits of eating a healthy diet. Secure relationships between the childminder and children enables children to feel safe and valued in the childminding setting. Children's safety is protected and they are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, when out walking they discuss road safety and how to stay safe when crossing the road and know they must hold the childminder's hand or the buggy. Behaviour is dealt with in a positive manner with clear boundaries set which are consistent and appropriate to the individual child's level of understanding. Regular praise and encouragement from the childminder develops children's self-esteem.

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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