

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/04/2012
Inspector	Susan Ennis
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 registered in 2010. She lives with her husband and two children aged 16 months and three years in Royston, Hertfordshire, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole ground floor of the house is used for childminding, along with the bathroom and one bedroom on the first floor. Children also have access to a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two cats and two guinea pigs.

The childminder provides care on each weekday during term time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, one of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a welcoming and safe environment for the children in her care. Children make sound progress in their learning and development. Overall, the childminder flexibly plans appropriate activities that meet their individual needs. She builds positive relationships with parents to provide a consistency in care. Documentation is maintained to a satisfactory standard to support her practice and procedures. The childminder has started to evaluate her provision and demonstrates a growing awareness of the practice required to promote positive outcomes for children.

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 observations, assessments and planning to demonstrate children's initial starting points, how their next steps are achieved and their overall progress towards the early learning goals
- share information with regard to learning and development with parents and other early years settings attended by the children
- develop the range of activities and resources to increase children's understanding of the wider world
- adjust the record of risk assessments to include the full details of each specific outing
- develop further the use of reflective practice to highlight strengths and areas for improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The majority of the policies and procedures in place ensure that children are protected. The childminder, having attended additional training, is aware of the signs of abuse and has the contact numbers for reporting concerns should they arise. She also ensures that anyone coming into contact with the children is suitable to do so. Children's welfare is sufficiently protected because the childminder takes most steps to minimise the hazards. Daily safety checks are carried out as well as regular risk assessments of the areas used by children. However, the full risk assessments for outings are not always included in the written records, and as a result do not formally identify the associated risks for all outings or allow them to be shared and regularly reviewed.

The childminder builds positive relationships with parents and generally updates them about their children's welfare through daily interaction. However, as only basic information is shared with regard to children's developmental progress, parents and other early years settings attended by the children are not fully involved in their learning. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns they may have and are made aware of the childminder's policies and procedures at the start of the placement.

The childminder has a positive understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, enabling her to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and families. Most aspects of the children's individual development are promoted because the childminder has sound procedures and resources in place to support their progress. For example, resources are regularly rotated to provide the children with added interest and stimulation. The childminder is becoming more aware of the childminding practice required. However, as limited self-reflection is currently taking place, strengths and areas for improvement are not being sufficiently highlighted, limiting further progress.

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

The childminder offers an appropriate range of opportunities and experiences to support the children in making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. She uses her knowledge to identify where the children are in their progress and is starting to use observations and assessments to plan their next steps. However, there is limited information regarding children's starting points and current systems do not consistently demonstrate how children's next steps are incorporated into planning or where children are in their overall development towards the early learning goals. Therefore, children's individual progress is not optimally promoted.

The childminder suitably ensures that there is a balanced range of activities to stimulate children's interests. For example, they develop their problem-solving skills as they look for pieces of puzzle to create the picture on the box. When they

decide that they would like to do the same puzzle, the childminder encourages them to complete it together, developing their sharing and cooperation skills. They enjoy experimenting with play dough and paints and like using their imagination skills to be 'sleeping lions.' Children are clearly settled with the childminder and enjoy each other's company. They are learning to care for others as they participate in helping the childminder look after the pet guinea pigs. Children are encouraged to use appropriate behaviour and the childminder, acting as a positive role model, helps them make the right choices. They are gently encouraged to recognise differences and respect diversity. However, the range of activities and resources reflecting the diverse society in which we live is currently only basic, and therefore children's understanding of the world around them is limited.

Children are becoming aware of their own safety as they adhere to sensitive reminders from the childminder. For example, they are reminded to sit on their chair properly so they do not fall off. They are also learning their own physical boundaries as they actively participate in visits to the local soft play areas where they are becoming increasingly confident in their own abilities. Children's health and welfare are suitably promoted as the childminder takes purposeful steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. For example, they know to wash their hands at appropriate times during the day. A range of home-cooked meals ensure that children eat a balanced diet.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3

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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