

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY411373
Inspection date	21/11/2011
Inspector	Anne Sheldon
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 2010. She lives with her husband and two children aged seven and three years in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children at any one time. She is currently minding three children, all of whom are within the early years age range.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local carer and toddler group, takes children to the library and the local park.

The childminder is able to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare is generally well safeguarded in this warm and caring home environment, where they are valued as individuals. Children are making good progress in their learning and development in all six learning areas. However, sufficient attention is not given to developing children's broad awareness of other cultures. Effective partnerships with parents ensures they are involved with their children's learning and development. Partnerships with other settings children attend are in their infancy and do not fully support transitions. The childminder adopts an enthusiastic approach to her work but self-evaluation, whilst accurate, is in its early stages.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- provide a first aid box with appropriate contents to meet the needs of children (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).
- 05/12/2011

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

- improve resources and activities to support children's opportunities to develop positive attitudes to diversity

- improve the steps taken to prevent the spread of infection with specific reference to the serving of meals and snacks
- develop partnerships further with other early years providers that children attend ensuring information regarding children's development and learning is shared.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder understands her role overall in terms of safeguarding children and so children's welfare is generally well promoted. She has a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures and related issues. Relevant checks are carried out on members of the household, providing reassurance to parents of their suitability to work with children. A comprehensive system is in place for identifying risks in the environment and on outings and actions are taken to minimise potential hazards. The childminder has a clear procedure for evacuating her property and regular fire drills are practised. This ensures children develop knowledge and understanding of the actions to take in the case of an emergency. However, the first aid box is not regularly checked and contains out-of-date materials putting children at risk.

The childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage which she uses effectively to promote children's learning and development. A reasonable range of well-maintained resources are available to support learning in all six areas. However, there are limited resources available to support an understanding of diversity. Consequently, children have limited opportunities to build awareness of a broad and diverse range of cultures. Good use is made of local facilities such as the library to supplement the collection of books and various social groups to extend children's social skills and increase their confidence. The individual needs of children are met and supported through the childminder's secure knowledge and frequent one-to-one attention.

The childminder is in the early stages of reflecting on and reviewing her own practices. She is committed to providing good quality care and continually improving her practices for the benefit of the children attending. She has a clear understanding of the importance of establishing strong relationships with parents and carers to support the needs of the children in her care. She provides parents with useful information prior to their children starting and updates them daily about their children's progress, so they are well informed. Parents are invited to join in events, such as the Christmas party so they feel included. Parents comment positively in written testimonials about their relationship with the childminder and the wide range of activities she provides. They see her as 'reliable, trustworthy and sensitive'. They say they are 'confident their children will be well looked after' by her. The childminder has started to establish relationships with local schools to support children's transitions, but these relationships are in the very early stages.

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

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's welcoming home. The competent childminder knows the children well and is aware of their preferences and individual needs. As a result children are making good progress in their early learning and development. Children are building trusting relationships with the childminder and return to her regularly for cuddles and reassurance. She extends children's learning skilfully as they play. For instance, she demonstrates to a child how to hang teacups up in a play kitchen and the child tries this new skill. The childminder encourages children to make choices throughout the day from a reasonable range of age-appropriate toys and equipment, building independence and self-confidence. Children's early communication skills are encouraged through asking open-ended questions, modelling conversation and correct pronunciation of words. Children enjoy listening to and joining in with singing of familiar rhymes and songs. Activities such as the use of a posting box help children become aware of shape in the environment and gives young children interesting opportunities to solve problems. Regular visits to the local park and the common are helping children build an awareness of the world around them. Varied opportunities such as using a drawing board and pencils as well as crayoning are used well to develop hand eye control and to foster early mark making skills.

Good behaviour is actively promoted and simple house rules set clear expectations for children. Age-appropriate explanations are given to children, which supports their understanding of right from wrong. They know their daily routine well so know what is expected. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through activities such as, wearing high visibility jackets when walking back from afternoon activities in winter. Gentle reminders about safety when moving around the house ensure children remain safe indoors. There are few planned opportunities to learn about other cultures and differences. However, children do have good opportunities to celebrate their own festivals with craft activities, singing and parties.

Children are provided with healthy home cooked meals such as, shepherd's pie with vegetables as well as snacks of fruit and raisins. Water is offered throughout the day to ensure they remain hydrated. Snack is, however, not served on plates and is eaten whilst children sit on the floor, which does not foster good eating habits. Children are encouraged to wash their hands prior to meals and after nappy changes to prevent the spread of infection. Regular access to fresh air and exercise on daily walks to school and outings to the park foster the development of children's physical skills and well-being.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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	3
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	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
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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