

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY411573
Inspection date	17/01/2011
Inspector	Angela Rowley
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 originally registered in 2002 and provided a childminding service until 2009. She re-registered in 2010. The childminder lives in the Grapenhall area of Warrington, Cheshire with her husband and two children aged five and nine years. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family have a pet rabbit, guinea pigs and a dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years, of whom no more than three may be in the early age group at any one time. At present there are four children on roll, three of whom are within the early years age range. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years and is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks or drives to collect children from school and takes younger children to toddler and activity sessions. She holds a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3 Children's care, learning and development. She is a member of the National Child Minding Association and local childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Highly effective partnership working, particularly with parents, ensures children's individual needs are met. The childminder has a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements and as a result, children are well cared for and make good progress in their learning and development. Effective policies and procedures are implemented. The childminder is a reflective practitioner who is committed to continual development. She has a clear understanding of most of her strengths and weaknesses, and has some appropriate plans for the future which will further develop the quality of the provision for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use quality improvement and self-evaluation processes as the basis of on-going internal review, assessing what the setting does against robust and challenging quality criteria to further identify priorities for development and gaps in the provision for example, routine opportunities for exploration and investigation outside
- develop a systematic approach to using observations to assess and plan the next steps for each child's developmental progress across all areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective arrangements for safeguarding children's welfare are in place. The childminder has attended training and clearly understands issues in relation to child protection. She has produced a comprehensive range of associated policies and procedures, which are aligned with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The childminder gives priority to ensuring children's safety. She conducts clear risk assessments of the premises and outings and she takes appropriate action to ensure children can play safely. Outings are very carefully organised. For example, when out with children the childminder carries individual identity cards containing details required for emergency situations. Children's health and well-being is positively promoted. Clear procedures regarding accidents and medication are in place and relevant documentation kept. The childminder ensures children's health is positively protected. She implements secure procedures to prevent the spread of infection and provides activities and routines which promote healthy and safe lifestyles.

The childminder provides a welcoming service that is responsive to individual needs. She helps children understand the world they live in by providing some attractive posters, toys and equipment, which promote positive images of diversity. She makes the most of community links to provide better outcomes for children. For example, she links with other childminders and attends local activity groups with the children. Excellent use is made of space within the home to provide a wide range of different activities and experiences. The designated playroom provides stimulating play space and a wide range of resources, which children access independently and which support them to achieve planned goals. Children have opportunities to be outside on a daily basis. They play on the 'trim trail' during the school pick up and have some access to the garden, although this is more routinely used during summer months.

Excellent settling in arrangements and the use of initial questionnaires enables the childminder to establish useful information about children's backgrounds, interests and abilities. This is used by the childminder to tailor learning experiences to the needs and abilities of individual children. The childminder has a very good working relationship with parents. They receive clear and detailed information about the childminding practice through a welcome pack, monthly newsletters and daily diary records. They are kept very well informed about their child's achievements and progress. Each month a summary report of the childminder's written observations are provided and are beginning to demonstrate that each child is making good progress. Parents are invited to contribute and offer feedback on their child's progress reports and they agree the next steps on which to focus for their child's development. Parents contribute their views and suggestions about the provision. These are taken on board to improve outcomes for children. Effective working relationships with external agencies are in place and the childminder has a good understanding of how to use her links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and progression for children when needed.

The childminder's commitment and dedication to bring about continual improvements results in consistently good outcomes for children. She maintains a training record for herself and has completed an extensive range of training to ensure her provision develops in line with changes in Early Years practice. She also has a clear plan for what further training will be of benefit to her provision and which will further enhance her ability to meet specific needs. The childminder uses her partnerships with other agencies very well. She is part of the local childminding network and uses these links to guide her own provision. She is also working with others in order to monitor her provision to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework successfully. However, the childminder's systems for monitoring her provision are narrow, which means she overlooks occasional opportunities to develop the provision even further.

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

The childminder's secure knowledge of how children learn through play, along with the learning, development and welfare requirements, promotes good outcomes for the children. Clear monthly planning ensures the children receive a wide range of opportunities for play and exploration across all areas of learning. Activities are well matched to children's learning needs because the childminder knows them very well. She observes and evaluates children's learning securely. She uses her spontaneous and occasionally focused written observations to inform a monthly summative assessment report. This is beginning to form a profile of the progress they are making. She has a clear awareness of the next steps planned for individuals, which are clearly promoted during activity planning and ensures they progress continually. However, she does not yet systematically use her observations to assess children's achievements across the different aspects of each area of learning in order to help her more quickly identify gaps in both achievement and provision for children's learning. Consequently, children make better progress in some areas of learning than others.

The welcoming, play centred organisation of the childminder's home successfully promotes active learning. Children freely access a wide range of good quality play materials which the childminder routinely extends based on children's current stages of development, the things which interest them and to support the current theme of learning. Consequently, children are able to direct their own play and follow through their own ideas, thus becoming independent thinkers and learners. They find their own belongings stored in their named storage baskets in the hall and they retrieve particular toys they want to play with from low level storage in the playroom. Children's independence is further fostered through the provision of ground floor, accessible toilet facilities where they meet their own personal needs very well. They are encouraged to try to do things for themselves and, as a result, when children get their shoes from their basket they put them on by themselves. Children use their imaginations in play continually and demonstrate their well-developed social skills. As they use instruments to accompany action songs played in the background, children show care and concern for others when they find an instrument for their friend and show an understanding of sharing the resources. The childminder devotes her time to playing with the children and she speaks and

sings with them in play. As a result, children are making some good progress in the development of their communication, language and literacy. A wealth of attractive materials promotes the children's interest in words and pictures. They look at books which support the current focus for their development. For example, a range of books about toilet training are set out on the playroom table. They use language to communicate in their role play, through talk on pretend telephones and they join in with familiar action songs having great fun as the childminder introduces props, such as a soft toy crocodile which makes the songs come alive. Children's mathematical development is promoted routinely. They show interest and concentrate well posting shapes in the sorters and they count out the number of buttons on their toy independently in play. They develop the skills they need for the future securely.

Children display a strong sense of security in the childminder's care and are very familiar with their routines. Their self-esteem is developing well as the relationships with their childminder are positive. They receive praise and encouragement continually. They know that they are valued as they have a permanent place in the childminder's home for their own belongings and for their artwork which they see displayed. Children feel safe to move around independently and they take part in activities which help them learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, they regularly take part in emergency evacuation practices and routinely fasten their own lap-strap on their booster seat at the table. They learn about being healthy through good routines which promote healthy lifestyles. Mealtimes are very well organised and used as a positive occasion of social sharing. Consequently, children enjoy this part of their routine and they are very well nourished. The childminder uses local farm produce to introduce children to a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Activities are organised which encourage and entice the children to try new tastes. For example, children try Chinese foods as part of the experiences planned around Chinese New Year. Additionally, they enjoy taking part in cooking activities, such as baking blackberry muffins and making home made fish fingers.

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	1

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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