

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/06/2012
Inspector	Lynne Talbot
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 one and four years in Stevenage. The whole ground floor of the property is used for childminding, with the exception of the utility room. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is able to provide care on each weekday during term time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than one may be in the early years age range. There are currently two children on roll in this age group, both of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individuality is recognised by the childminder, who has a good understanding of their needs and interests. She creates a close working relationship with parents and is beginning to develop partnerships with other settings that children attend. These steps ensure that children's needs are met and that activities offered support good overall progress in their learning. The childminder promotes children's health and welfare through daily routines, comprehensive assessment of risk and a robust knowledge of safeguarding procedures. She shows drive and commitment, providing a good basis for development, and clear reflective processes are underway to reflect on the overall care and continued 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 balance of adult-led and freely chosen or child-initiated activities, delivered through indoor and outdoor play; with reference to opportunities for them to encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environments and in real-life situations
- develop further the links with all other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and coherence to support outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is well promoted because the childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a robust understanding of her

responsibilities relating to safeguarding. A recent training course and previous experience within the childcare field support safeguarding understanding. The childminder ensures that all persons required undertake the appropriate checks to safeguard children. Risk assessment is comprehensive for the home and all excursions; a recent addition is the rear garden that has now been included in the registration. Children complete emergency evacuation procedures regularly to gain an understanding of safety. This routine is displayed and a log is maintained. Details of the procedure for uncollected or missing children are in written policies, adding to the well-planned procedures for illness and medical assistance. All these factors contribute to the childminder safeguarding children well and ensuring they are kept safe from harm. She offers an inclusive service to children and works with parents to understand each child as an individual. She requests key words and phrases from parents to ensure that children's needs may be met. Children explore national events, such as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and review the roles of different people within the community. They discuss other countries that are visited by their extended family, such as Australia. Consequently, children show a lively interest in the world around them. They explore the community in which they live and use local facilities including the children's centre and local parkland areas.

The relationship with parents is strong and is enhanced by the daily diary and the shared learning journal for each child. Parents are invited to contribute to the learning by writing about children's emerging interests at home, new achievements and development, and by reviewing the care provided by the childminder. Notice boards and a full range of policies and procedures keep parents fully informed. The childminder is not currently caring for any children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, she has a very good understanding of the importance of working with other professionals to provide a good level of support for such children when the need arises. She is able to draw on previous work experience wherein she has cared for several children with specific needs and worked in multi-agency groups. The childminder currently cares for children who attend other early years provision. However, while she is aware of the importance of sharing information with other settings, she has not yet established a partnership where learning and development is fully shared to support children's continuity of care. The childminder shows good capacity to continue making changes. She has established a system of reflective practice that includes a review of practice, adaptations to the premises, training and plans for future development. Children achieve and make good progress in their learning overall because resources are offered to them which provide variety and stimulation.

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

The childminder has a very clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements and offers experiences to meet individual children's needs. She successfully integrates her knowledge of children's abilities and interests into planned activities, using detailed learning journals to monitor progress made towards the early learning goals. Older children contribute towards planned activities and make choices for planning for future weeks, some of which stem from activities completed at other settings and stimulate their

interest. The childminder successfully fosters child-led learning by supporting choice wherever possible. Children are encouraged to question what they see around them. For example, a discussion regarding honey leads to the exploration of where honey comes from and includes children making their own sandwiches for lunch and tasting honey. Children are confident and enjoy their time spent the childminder. Younger children freely explore the role play area where they 'cook', use the toy microwave and explore pots and pans, copying the adults that they see around them. Early technology toys stimulate interest, such as the farm trailer where animals fit into shaped holes, making sounds and travelling across the floor. Younger children explore language as they make the sounds and copy the childminder as she names the animals. Books are well used and freely accessible. Children visit the library where they choose both fiction and non-fiction books, stimulating their current interests.

The childminder fosters children's emotional well-being by praising them frequently. They seek her attention and bring toys to her for help, such as clothes for dolls, showing a sense of belonging. The childminder offers a continuous commentary as children play with toys of their choosing. This stimulates both language and aspects of learning, including colour, shape and size. Younger children show that they are learning to share and take turns when they play alongside each other with cars and ramps, offering cars to each other. The childminder encourages such actions with praise. Hygiene routines are robust, and children use wipes before snacks to encourage them to learn about personal hygiene. Parents are involved in the nutrition of children, with younger children's meals provided by them. Older children are engaged in menu planning, supporting their awareness of food for good health. Children take part in some planting, such as sunflowers in pots, to observe growth. They measure the seedlings as they grow and explore the lifecycle of a plant, developing their own charts. However, while children are physically active indoors, at social groups, and in local parks, they do not have regular opportunities to explore the natural world. The garden was not previously included in the registration but has now been approved for use; therefore, outdoor learning is now included within the planning to promote an understanding of the world around them. Children are beginning to learn about the environment when they sort materials for the recycling collection; this fosters their understanding of sustainability. Children behave well and positive reinforcement promotes acceptable behaviours. They are establishing skills for the future to assist in their learning and development, as well as their place in society.

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	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	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