

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/02/2011
Inspector	ISP Inspection
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 2010. She lives with her husband and one child aged 15 months in the Acocks Green area of Birmingham. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and the home is close to shops, parks and schools. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play. The family has two pet cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group, all of whom attend part-time. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder is a qualified teacher and holds a recognised childcare qualification. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a good setting where varied and interesting experiences are used well to enrich children's overall learning and development. Children are interested, curious and show delight when discovering new things because of the high levels of support they receive. Positive steps are taken to promote their achievements and well-being and children show they feel safe, well cared for and relaxed.

The childminder uses her teaching knowledge and experience very well to help support the children in her care and looks carefully at what she does in order to improve her service. There is a strong relationship with parents, although there is scope to do more to ensure that partnerships with others are strengthened.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the arrangements for liaising with local settings and professionals involved in caring for children so that information about children is shared and continuity of care and learning is maintained.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding procedures are effective so that children feel safe and secure. The childminder has a thorough understanding of how to protect children and understands the importance of regularly updating her knowledge through top-up training. She works closely with parents to gain important information about such things as children's living arrangements and who can collect them. Careful steps are taken to ensure all risks are minimised and the childminder talks to children about ways to avoid being hurt and is always close by to protect and support them.

Although new to minding, the childminder shows a strong commitment to improving what she does and offering a high quality service. Self-evaluation is used well to consider what she does and to plan improvements for the future. The childminder has a high level of early years qualifications and uses her expertise to identify and meet children's varying needs. Learning journeys are very effective and the childminder uses her knowledge of each child to make good decisions about the next steps in their learning. For example, she records memorable moments to share with parents and provides records of children's time with her through photographs and observation records.

The childminder takes great care to understand and learn about the particular needs of each child and is particularly skilled at supporting the youngest children. For example, she uses body language, gesture, expressions and tone of voice to help toddlers develop their understanding and to give them positive messages about how to behave. Children are encouraged to make friends and the childminder provides play things, such as books, that show families from diverse backgrounds in a positive way. These help to develop young children's curiosity about the lives of others.

Children benefit from the strong relationship developed with their parents. The childminder takes time to listen to parents about how they want their child to be cared for and to keep them well informed. For example, she makes sure she gains their permission for such things as seeking emergency medical treatment when necessary and provides them with menus so that they know what meals and food their children will have each day. The childminder has past experience of working with outside professionals in order to ensure children get the help and support they need. She has used this knowledge to begin to open up channels of communication with local settings and professionals involved in the care of children, although this is still in the early stages of development.

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

Children are cared for in an atmosphere of warmth and nurturing. Their communication skills are well supported so that they can make their wants and needs known. Children's different interests and personalities are understood and they are carefully observed so that, when their situation begins to change, the childminder can support their next steps. As a result, they are motivated and interested in the broad range of learning experiences offered. The youngest children are particularly well supported as they learn to make choices, concentrate, explore and revisit new things. Toddlers are developing the knowledge they need to carry out simple tasks, such as, hand washing or tidying away their toys. Important social skills are learnt as they share, co-operate and play together.

Children enjoy a colourful, homely environment. Their playthings are carefully chosen and placed at child level to encourage even the youngest child to reach out and grab the things that interest them. Warm praise and expressive tones let young children know when they have done something to please and the childminder understands the smiles, giggles, facial expressions and body language that tell her what a baby wants or needs. Lots of learning happens throughout each day and children show they are fascinated by new things. For example they discovered the delights of both natural and household everyday objects, such as, pine cones and hair brushes. Important steps in early language skills are learnt through songs and rhymes and everyday tasks such as putting on shoes or changing nappies are turned into simple counting games. Young children snuggle close for stories and learn to count the things they see in their picture books. Sensory play with paint, water and corn flour help children to explore and experiment and they use their imaginations as they dress up or make up their own games with dolls and soft toy animals.

Children are secure and develop a strong sense of belonging in the childminder's home. They settle quickly, show they are comfortable and at ease. Soft music often plays in the background to soothe or help children drift off to sleep and this helps them to feel secure and well cared for. Gentle tones remind toddlers to be careful when climbing into the ball pit and the childminder ensures she is always close by to support children as they develop their early walking skills. The importance of a healthy life-style is promoted well with healthy foods, plenty of drinks and lots of physical play offered throughout the day. There are home-cooked meals to enjoy each day and lots of fresh fruit.

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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