

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/11/2011
Inspector	Tina Kelly
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 February 2011. He works alongside his wife who is also a registered childminder. They live with their two children aged seven and nine years, in Bushey on the outskirts of Watford, in Hertfordshire. The ground floor of the house, with a dedicated play room, is the main area used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Children do not generally access upstairs other than to use the family bathroom and to sleep. The family has a cat and rabbits.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. He is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom, no more than three may be in the early years age range. When the two childminders are working together a maximum of eight children, with no more than six in the early years age range, may be cared for. The joint arrangement currently has seven children on role in the early years age group, they also provide care for children after school. 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.

Young children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care. He uses observations and assessments effectively to show children are making good progress in all areas of learning. Some of the information gained is used to plan for future activities and next steps in the children's learning. Parents are kept well informed of their children's personal care routines and the activities they have enjoyed. The documents required for the well-being of the children and the smooth running of the setting, are in place. The childminder has drive and ambition to maintain continuous improvements however, the self-evaluation process is not well enough established to enable him to monitor and evaluate all areas of his practice effectively.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the process for self- evaluation and monitor practice to promote outcomes for all children
- review the assessment process to focus on children's interests and individual learning needs to assist in planning 'what next' to promote their existing talents

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded as both the childminders in this joint registration are clear about their responsibilities to provide a safe environment. The childminder has information and leaflets provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board readily available and he bases the safeguarding policy on this information. Appropriate background checks have been taken out on all adults in the home and the visitors' book ensures he is aware of all adults that come to the home. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Extensive risk assessments are in place and are very effective in identifying and minimising risks to children within the home and on outings. Children are beginning to be aware of their own safety when out in the community as the childminder talks to them about road safety and stranger danger. There is a good range of quality resources readily available and stored at low-level around the play room. They are age appropriate and linked to the interests of the children being cared for. The garden provides a stimulating area for children to play and extend their physical skills.

The childminder has an effective process in place to share information with parents about the children's personal care and aspects of the day they have enjoyed. This is a two way process as parents keep the childminder informed about events from home, as they are able to have regular input into the children's learning journeys. The childminder is committed to working in partnership with other agencies and early years settings where the children attend. Good links ensure the childminder is aware of the experiences and progress that children make when they attend other early years settings. The childminder has developed a working partnership with the local Surestart Children's Centre. He is involved in the local childminder network and is aware of the support services provided by the centre. The childminder has not cared for children who have special educational needs and/or learning disabilities. However, he has a very clear understanding of the importance of working with parents to ensure all aspects of their home life and the children's individual needs, are respected and valued.

The childminder is beginning to evaluate his practice. However, the process is not well-established so he is not able to clearly identify areas that work well and those that are to be developed to continually improve the service he provides. The childminder is aware of the training opportunities that are provided by the Early Years Partnership and is committed to extending his service and improving outcomes for all children.

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

The childminder provides an interesting range of resources, activities and outings throughout the week for the children of all ages. Photographs show children enjoying a variety of experiences, both in the home and out in the community. There is a very thorough settling in process as he spends time with parents to establish a good understanding of the children's individual learning and care needs.

This provides a good starting point to build on the children's interests and previous experiences. Children are beginning to understand the simple rules that are in place to teach them to share and take turns. The childminder is an excellent role model, as he talks to the children and uses praise to promote good behaviour. Children are considerate and play alongside each other well. They are beginning to understand the impact their actions have on other children playing nearby. This has developed a strong sense of belonging, as children know what is expected of them and thrive in this well managed setting.

The detailed learning journeys show comprehensive observations are shared with parents and reflect on the many different opportunities that the children enjoy during the week. They show that children are making good progress in all areas of learning. Outings are an important aspect of the week's plans. Trips to the local park develop children's physical skills. Toddler groups and play sessions develop children's confidence and social skills. They are gaining confidence and are beginning to enjoy new experiences in a safe environment and with good support from their carer. Older children's needs are recognised and well met as the activities are adapted and age appropriate toys and games are readily available. Flexible plans are adapted to follow the young children's interests and the childminder has started to look at how children are progressing. He is beginning to plan activities on basic themes that are suitable for the young children in his care. The next steps in the children's learning is being planned for, however, the outcomes are not specific to each individual child's developing skills.

Children show great confidence in their carer. They are beginning to find a voice and are competent communicators for their ages. The childminder takes notice of their requests and responds well to their needs. Children show great concentration skills as they are well supported with simple printing activities. When they find a favourite book, they enjoy their requests for story telling and they sit and listen with great delight. Their sense of belonging and self esteem is enhanced to a good level with this close interaction. Children enjoy singing, dancing and using instruments to drum and shake. Their early counting skills are strengthened through every day routines, such as, counting and talking about the shapes of blocks and bricks. Equality and diversity is promoted through a range of resources and events planned throughout the year. Resources are being sought to reflect different cultures and family settings are incorporated in the play with sensitive interaction by the childminder. The childminder knows the children well and he provides toys and resources that they are interested in and enjoy.

Children's personal health is promoted with good nappy change routines. The childminder provides all meals when required and a sample menu shows a range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks are supplied throughout the day. Children are very familiar with the snack time routines, they wash their hands and sit and wait patiently, as the childminder talks and reassures them at all times. Children have developed a warm and trusting relationship with the other children and their carers. Their self-esteem is promoted to a good level with the consistent interaction and well organised activities and freedom to make choices about their play. Children are learning skills that ensure they cope with new experiences and to extend and develop skills for their future learning.

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	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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