

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	31/01/2012
Inspector	Frank 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 2011 and lives with her husband and two children aged nine and two years in Whiston, Merseyside. The home is close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor and a bathroom and bedroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family have a hamster and terrapins.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, two of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently two children on roll, both of whom are in the early years age group. The childminder is also registered to care for children aged over eight years on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

The childminder holds a recognised childcare qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She receives support from the local authority and takes the children out regularly to children's centres, toddler groups, parks, libraries, allotment club and other local places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder's home is a safe, pleasant and inviting place for children to be. She is attentive to the children and organises the resources attractively so as to create an enabling environment. Effective planning and assessment for children's learning ensure that children make good progress in their development and enjoy an interesting and varied curriculum. Documentation is accurately maintained and used effectively to engage parents so that the children's unique needs are known and met very well. Formal self-evaluation is still in the early stages, but the childminder communicates ambition and drive to secure future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- refine the activity planning to include additional activities that support children to problem solve indoors and outdoors, and consider how the use of information and communication technology could be incorporated into this
- conduct regular evacuation drills and record details in a fire log book of any problems encountered and how they were resolved.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of the procedures to follow to safeguard children and report any concerns she may have. She has recently revised her policies and procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, adopting their preferred procedures and documentation systems. Relevant contact details and flow charts are displayed within the home and parents are provided with copies of all key policies. All adults within the home have completed a full vetting procedure to ensure their suitability to be in contact with children.

The childminder promotes the children's safety very well. Her home is well organised and she maintains rigorous security, including the checking of identity and recording of visitors. Her daily practices ensure that the home is checked for hazards and the formal risk assessment has been recently updated. She keeps her home very clean and she follows good hygiene procedures, such as those for nappy changing. Safety equipment is fitted, such as safety gates to prevent young children accessing stairways unaccompanied, and she helps children learn about keeping themselves safe as she gently reminds them why it is not safe to stand on the toys. Fire safety equipment and detectors are fitted and these are currently checked monthly. She has prepared fire evacuation procedure, however, although she has practised this herself, she has yet to do this with the children. Therefore, she has not fully checked the effectiveness of the drill. The childminder maintains very good documentation, which contributes to the effectiveness of her service and supports good partnership working with parents as they are made aware of how and why procedures are implemented.

Children benefit from the childminder's good organisation, including the ways she supports them in their play and daily routines. The childminder has lots of resources, which she recognises would be a hazard if they could all be accessed at one time. Therefore, has created a file with visual images of the full range of her toys and equipment, which means children can indicate toys that they would like to play with in addition to those already available in the lounge. This demonstrates the childminder's proactive approach to her service and provides a useful tool for engaging children who may not communicate verbally. The weekly programme is thoughtfully organised so children have a lots of interesting experiences outside of the home, including visiting the local play and safari parks. Very good quality books, dolls and jigsaws provide a visual representation of the diversity within today's society and help children gain an awareness of their wider world. The childminder has a range of information about different cultural and religious celebrations, such as Diwali, Christmas and Chinese New Year, introducing further opportunities for children to explore the experiences of their own and other people's cultures.

The childminder demonstrates a commitment to making improvements to her service and she articulates her ambition well. She has begun to evaluate her service and seeks support from others, such as the local authority. The childminder has effective systems in place for engaging parents and sharing information. This is used to help plan the children's individual care and routines. Information about

the children's development includes parents' comments and regular communication is maintained through daily chats and diaries. The childminder does not currently care for any children who attend other early years provision or any children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, she is aware of the importance of sharing information with other settings or services when appropriate to support children's continuity of care.

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

The attentive and caring attitude of the childminder means that children demonstrate a feeling of being safe and secure. They are confident to engage with strangers when the childminder is close and they freely express their needs and wishes, such as asking for toys or more rice cakes at snack time. The children enjoy a healthy lifestyle as the childminder encourages them to eat a balance of foods. For example, she encourages the children to try additional pieces of fruit as an alternative to the rice cakes. The children are very relaxed and the childminder includes lots of opportunities to go on outings and visit open spaces to run and be active as part of the daily routines. Children gain practical experience of hygiene routines, such as the cleaning of hands and wiping of noses, so that they gain an understanding of how to promote their own good health and well-being.

The childminder knows the individual children well and has a simple but effective system for recording her observations of the children. She is using her observations to help her to plan the next steps for the children's individual learning. These planned activities are complemented and enhanced through her organisation of the home and the way she plays with and supports the children's learning. For example, regular, spontaneous story times, take place, during which the children cuddle up on the sofa and gleefully shout the end of the rhyming text. These story times are unrushed and the childminder uses the opportunity to encourage the children to talk about what they see and use their developing vocabulary. She sits on the floor and encourages the children to colour match and count with the cars.

The planning of the experiences for children is good and the children benefit greatly from lots of first-hand experiences. For example, they learn about caring for plants and nature's cycles through regular attendance at a local allotment club. They see different animals, such as ducks at the local park and giraffes at the safari park. Consequently, the children experience a full curriculum that spans all six areas of learning. However, within the planning of activities, the childminder is less inclined to consider how she could support children's critical thinking or use a wider range of information and communication technology.

That said, the children are making good progress in their learning and are confident and eager learners. They are well behaved and the childminder supports their early citizenship very well. For example, by providing extra cars and encouraging the children to take turns to shout 'go' when racing the cars down the ramp. The children participate in a range of creative media, for example, they paint and make marks with water and paintbrushes in the garden, use chalk on the

board, use crayons to create pictures, build with blocks and fit jigsaws together. These activities, along with the childminder's interactions, are actively fostering the children's curiosity and dispositions, which help them develop perseverance and their skills for the future.

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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