

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	322139
Inspection date	27/04/2009
Inspector	Gillian Sutherland

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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1996. She lives with her husband and three children, one of whom is an adult and the others are aged 12 and 14 years old. They live in the Broadgreen area of Liverpool, close to shops, parks, schools, and places of interest. The areas of the childminder's home used for childminding are on the ground floor and the only area upstairs used for childminding is the family bathroom. There is a secure, fully enclosed garden for children's outdoor play. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group and is also caring for children aged between five and eleven years old. All children attend on a part time basis. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes and collects children from the local school, regularly attends a playgroup and is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminder network.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children are cared for in a very homely environment, where they participate in a wide and varied range of activities and experiences. They enjoy their time spent with the childminder whose excellent knowledge and understanding of their individual needs plus the provision of appropriate resources ensure they make excellent progress in their learning and development. Exemplary partnerships with parents ensure continuity of care and effective links with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers have been successfully implemented. The childminder's home is an inclusive environment where all children learn through play and the excellent resources available, about the differing needs and circumstances of other children and people, within their local community and also within the wider world.

The highly skilled childminder includes children and their parents when identifying her strengths and areas for improvement of the setting. Her positive approach and improvements made since last inspection ensure outcomes for children are fully met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop planning and assessment systems to help children make progress towards the early learning goals.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by an enthusiastic and dedicated childminder who monitors her professional development well and is proactive in accessing relevant training, such as NVQ level 3 in Child Care Learning and Development and who has progressed further by undertaking NVQ level 4. The childminder evaluates her practice to improve outcomes for children and seeks the views of parents when making changes to the documentation used. For example, when recently reviewing the children's assessment documents she discussed with the parents the format that was being used and sought their views regarding the use of more pictorial evidence.

The childminder has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures which reflect her commitment to promoting children's welfare and her knowledge of the requirements. The childminder ensures children are safe within the home and garden through written risk assessments, daily checks and the use of safety equipment. She raises children's awareness of keeping themselves safe in and out of the home, for example, indoors there are house rules to be adhered to and when on outings they discuss road safety issues. This is extended with the use of role play in the garden, using props to further support their understanding. All outings are risk assessed and the childminder has written to the different venues and obtained information regarding the risk assessment of those venues. The childminder has robust systems in place to ensure children are safeguarded and has attended training which ensures she is fully aware of the procedures to follow if she has any concerns.

Parents and children are made very welcome from the moment they step indoors and a sense of belonging is fostered. There are two notice boards in the hall, one for the parents and a separate one for children, each with relevant information on. Photographs of all the children on roll are displayed by their coat pegs thus ensuring that all children identify other children that may attend when they are not there, and whose names and art work is on display. The childminder develops good working relationships with parents and there are robust arrangements from the beginning to ensure the childminder has sufficient knowledge of their child's routines and their starting points and capabilities. She has developed excellent links with other childcare providers. For instance, the sharing of profile documents and daily discussions ensure a smooth transition for the children as they move to different settings. Written correspondence from parents express their satisfaction at the excellent communication they have with the childminder regarding their children's daily routines and progress.

The childminder is the secretary in her local childminding group and she shares her professional knowledge and supports new childminders in the local area.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have a real sense of belonging within the childminder's home and are given individual attention by the highly skilled childminder who interacts with them exceptionally well to develop their communication skills and to promote their learning and development. Children are very relaxed, confident and are encouraged to make decisions about their play.

The childminder's home is meticulously clean and children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and are made aware of why it is important. There are arrangements in place to ensure that medication and accidents are routinely recorded and promptly shared with parents to ensure continuity in children's care. Appropriate consents have been gained from parents to ensure children's well-being, such as to seek emergency medical treatment and to take children on outings and to transport children in the car

The childminder supports children in their activities and she consistently reinforces colour and shape recognition and counting skills as they participate in the different activities and extends their thinking and conversational skills by asking questions as they play. For example, the children were involved in a project about spiders and insects and the conversation that took place centred on whether they could fly, how many legs or wings they had and also where they lived. Children persevere at their self-chosen activities and are keen to describe how they made a den using the dining chairs and a large blanket. They used their arms as they eagerly tried to demonstrate the height and length of the den and then talked about how they sat in the den. Children thoroughly enjoy creative activities, such as play dough and painting and colouring. They talk to each other and to the childminder about the different colouring materials they are using and want to know if the chalk will break if they press very hard. They use a range of small tools skilfully as they cut, roll and make shapes with play dough or as they use pastry when baking. Photographs and observations show children taking part in a wide and varied range of creative activities.

Children are also involved in gardening projects; the latest one involves the planting of seeds for a wide range of different vegetables. They are patiently waiting for them to grow, watering them when required and eagerly waiting for the time when they can either plant out into the garden or into some pots or in the case of the vegetables, to enjoy as part of their snack or lunch menu. Photographs were seen of the children using a range of fruits to help make their own 'fruit smoothie' drinks and the childminder tries to ensure that children get at least four out of the five recommended portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Children's health and welfare requirements are met very well, as the childminder provides a varied range of home cooked meals and snacks and children have regular drinks, including water throughout the day. The childminder provides healthy and nutritious meals, such as roast dinners with fresh vegetables. Parents are provided with a sample menu and the childminder adapts it to include children's special dietary requirements.

There are very good opportunities for children to be out in the fresh air and be

physically active, for example, as they play in the childminder's garden or visit the many places of interest including such venues as Chester Zoo, Croxteth Park and Farmer Ted's. At such venues children can play in the wider open play spaces or see and learn about the care of the different animals. Children have some resources which introduce them to technology, including pretend mobile telephones for use in their role play and lots of sound toys, which the younger children enjoy. They also have the use of cameras, pretend ones for the very young children but for the older ones there is a digital camera which they use to take photographs of each other. They then patiently wait for the childminder to connect this to the printer allowing them to see their photographs. Children receive lots of praise from the childminder for their achievements and their art and craft work is proudly displayed around her home, thus raising their self-esteem.

The childminder manages children and their behaviour very well and deals with minor disputes effectively thus helping children develop an understanding of right from wrong. Children are polite, using please and thank you at appropriate times without prompting. They respond favourably to the childminder's request to tidy up and benefit from the consistent praise and encouragement they receive from her. The childminder ensures that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Observations are ongoing and the childminder uses the information to plan future activities and to provide resources to further children's individual development.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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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

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