

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/09/2009
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
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 lives with her husband and two children aged 11 and 14 years. They live in a semi-detached house within walking distance of all local facilities, such as the hospital, school and beach. Children are taken to and from local schools and early years groups on foot. The childminding facilities are easily accessible being mostly on the ground floor of the house. Toilet facilities are located on the first floor and some first floor bedrooms can be used for care when appropriate. There is a fully enclosed garden to the rear of the property for outside play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and a local childminding group.

The childminder has been registered since 1996 and may normally care for six children under eight years. She sometimes works with her mother who is registered to assist with the children. On these occasions the childminder may care for additional children. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. At the time of the inspection there were seven children on roll in the younger age group and three older children.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of each child's needs and a clear understanding of child development. This means that children are very well cared for and make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children enjoy their increasing knowledge, skills and confidence due to the pleasant homely environment and stable supportive relationships. There are very well established links with parents and other agencies to make sure that children and their families benefit from a high level of support in all areas. The childminder and her assistant are highly motivated in their work with the children and they continue to evaluate how outcomes for children can be further improved. However, evaluation monitoring systems are not fully systematic.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the learning environment, for example by developing a systematic approach to checking that all areas of learning are fully available in the indoor and outdoor areas
- continue to develop understanding of the 'development matters' part of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children's learning and development can be monitored in relation to the framework.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There are clearly defined procedures for safeguarding children and protecting their welfare. The childminder prioritises relevant training and keeps all child protection guidance carefully filed should she, or parents, need advice or guidance. Importantly, the childminder and her assistant create a happy, caring environment where children feel safe and secure in their relationships with the adults and their peers. All documentation necessary for the safe management of the provision are carefully filed and kept up to date. This includes records of attendance, risk assessment and emergency evacuation practices.

The childminder effectively uses comments from parents, ideas from her assistant and well established links with other agencies, such as the local health visiting team, to secure continual improvements in outcomes for children and support for families. The adults also value the inspection process as part of their continuous improvements and act promptly on any recommendations raised at previous inspections. The childminder attends training regularly and reads various publications to make sure she keeps abreast of early years issues. For example, her Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) training has highlighted the fact that she needs to improve her outdoor learning environment now that there is increased emphasis on meeting children's individual learning styles. She has already started to make plans to cover the area so that it is accessible to all children throughout the year. However, there is no systematic way to check that all areas of learning are easily accessible to all children, in the outdoor area as well as indoors. The childminder is also proactive in working around the limitations of the provision; she is proactive in promoting older children's attendance at local pre-school facilities when she feels unable to fully promote their learning needs, due to the time needed for the babies.

There is good, clear information for parents about all aspects of the care and learning provided alongside a good range of advice leaflets to help them to promote their children's care and development. A high level of communication with parents, both written and verbal, means that children's individual needs are fully promoted. Importantly, the effective three-way relationships that children enjoy with the childminder and their parents together creates happy, cheerful periods of transition; babies gurgle happily as they are handed over and they snuggle with either their parent or the childminder as care arrangements or developmental issues are discussed. Parents are keen to take part in the inspection process. They say that they find the daily diaries very useful and the childminder's support invaluable. They are particularly pleased with their children's excellent progress since attending the setting.

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

Children develop successful attachments and strong bonds with the childminder. The youngest children look to her for reassurance and are quickly consoled when

she returns to the playroom. A similarly trusting relationship with the childminder's assistant means that there is a pleasant environment where children are motivated, confident and happy. They are proud of the warm praise and encouragement they receive for the efforts and behaviour. Babies beam with pride at the attention they receive for joining in with action rhymes, standing unaided or drawing on their own paper. In the same way, older children are motivated to complete increasingly complicated jigsaws, try to put their name on their picture or show concern towards the younger ones. Children learn a great deal of acceptance and understanding of others. The childminder's wide experience in working with children with a range of needs and backgrounds, coupled with a continuous training programme means that she has a clear understanding of child development and effective childminding practice. She is also developing a good understanding of the 'development matters' part of the EYFS but is not yet using this fully to monitor children's attainment. She makes sure that children engage in a range of activities and outings covering all areas of learning and works closely with parents and observes children as they play to establish their level of development. She makes sure that resources, activities and external support where necessary, are available to help them to make good progress.

Children help themselves freely from the equipment in the stimulating play room. They enjoy seeing the many photographs of themselves and their friends on the wall, this helps them to feel welcome in the child friendly setting. Older children learn to find the appropriate numbers on the frieze as they join in enthusiastically with a well known number rhyme. There is a lively and pleasant learning environment. Babies are motivated to explore the boxes and baskets at floor level. They concentrate well as they experiment by dropping a toy down the step and picking it up or pause to investigate how their world appears through the plastic packaging. Older children confidently tell the childminder when they want something out that is stored at a higher level to maintain the babies' safety; they are eager to complete the more complicated jigsaws and explore the garden with the binoculars. She rotates resources regularly to provide as much choice and variety as possible. However, some easily accessible, low level storage could be used more effectively. Specifically, there is a degree of duplication of small world characters, with little appeal, and therefore limited accessible storage for mark making equipment or the train set.

The garden is used well to promote children's development as well as their health. The garden is effectively divided so that babies and toddlers have free access to a small, safely walled area directly adjacent to the playroom; the larger area beyond provides older children with good opportunities to develop their skills and strength whilst still within sight and sound of the childminder or her assistant. When joining in with the inspection, children say excitedly that they have great fun on the childminder's trampoline or on the slide. Babies learn the necessary skills to go up and down the small step safely, they investigate the resources freely and sleep peacefully in the fresh air.

The childminder and her assistant have a good understanding about the learning that takes place through everyday routines and activities. Children learn about the world around them on their frequent walks out to the beach or park or into town. They are very confident about which number bus to take for particular outings and

learn how to use the pedestrian crossing as they take the older children to school. Children become confident in routines that promote their health and safety. Importantly, the childminder's excellent knowledge of their individual needs and dispositions enables her to promote their safety whilst increasing their understanding. Children's health is successfully promoted. Older children learn to manage their own personal hygiene as appropriate, explaining confidently that they used the soap and water. Babies enjoy the closeness with the childminder as she chats to them as they have their nappies changed. Parents provide children's meals which means that the quality of the food is variable. However, there is good advice for parents on all aspects of child health and children enjoy the additional portions of fresh fruit and the ample drinks provided by the childminder. Children know which is their cup or bottle and they drink from this throughout the day as they play. Suitably nourished and efficiently hydrated, children enjoy being active and concentrate well.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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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