

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	30/09/2009
Inspector	Joan, Patricia Flowers
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 has been registered since 2008. She lives with her husband and grown-up child in the Preston area of Lancashire. Children are accommodated in the conservatory, lounge and dining area on the ground floor with access to an enclosed outdoor area at the rear that has a covered fish pond as a feature.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children. She minds with a co-childminder and when working together they may care for a maximum of six children, all of whom may be in the early years age range. They are currently caring for eight children, six of whom are in the early year age range. They also offer care for children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder offers care from 7.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday all year round.

Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice and also operate a key person system.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

There are appropriate and interesting toys and learning activities available for children so they make steady progress towards achieving the early learning goals. The learning and developmental needs of all children are being increasingly supported through more focused planning for each individual's child's needs. Inclusion in this setting is generally promoted satisfactorily and the organisation of records and documents is managed soundly. Partnership with parents is good and underpins the childminder's practice to ensure that necessary information is exchanged frequently, enabling children's changing needs to be supported. Emerging self-evaluation by the childminder is starting to assist in identifying priorities for development so that her provision can better respond to and improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop self-evaluation and quality improvement processes as the basis for embedding continuous improvement
- promote positive attitudes to diversity through activities that encourage children to talk about similarities and differences and the reasons for these; wherever possible and practical help children to learn to value aspects of their own and other peoples' lives
- incorporate technology resources that children recognise into their play, such as safe equipment to play with like torches, tape recorders and cameras.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children and their families are always welcome at the provision. Children are safeguarded because there is a clear written policy and procedure now in place that is shared with parents and carers and the childminder demonstrates understanding of the procedures to follow should any concerns become known about any child in her care. All persons over 16 residing in the home have had Criminal Record Bureau checks completed and supervision is keenly applied to ensure children are not exposed to un-vetted people. Initial meetings and settling in visits are used effectively to complete necessary documentation about each child and to establish the rapport, which builds into positive relationships with parents. Parents are provided with information about the childminder's policies and procedures, such as the safeguarding and the sick child policy together with the required permissions. Daily informal chats and written diaries ensure that all parties are kept informed of emerging issues and the progress and achievements that children are making.

A child-orientated environment awaits the children with some positive images available to promote inclusion. Children, however, do not have many opportunities to learn about developing positive attitudes to diversity through activities that encourage them to talk about similarities and differences and the reasons for these, and about valuing aspects of their own and other peoples' lives. The home environment is clean, warm, welcoming and suitably organised to help children develop their independence, as well as managing their own personal needs. They make their own choices of activities from accessible age appropriate resources and children have opportunities to play outside in the fresh air every day to promote their physical well-being. The childminder and her co-childminder take joint responsibility for maintaining appropriate records. The required documentation is in place and informs parents of the care and learning received at this setting. Self-evaluation of the service involves the views of her co-childminder but does not focus sufficiently yet on identifying areas for improvement to ensure continuous development. This exercise, however, is recognised as being a useful tool to raise the quality of care provided. Actions raised at the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed so children are better safeguarded and kept safe and now fully meet the requirements of registration.

The childminder and her co-childminder take joint responsibility for working closely and cooperatively with parents and all parents know which childminder is their child's key link carer. These effective partnerships are evident from the feedback comments made to Ofsted. For example, that their children have a 'positive experience' and children 'receive lots of care and attention' and 'children are happy and settled attending Baby Love Childcare and do not want to leave at home time'.

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

The home promotes a relaxed, conducive and enabling environment that is child-orientated in relation to the child-sized furniture and equipment. Children can access their play and planned activities easily and are encouraged to do so, so their confidence and independence is promoted from a very early age. They enjoy a balanced range of activities, which provide opportunities in all areas of learning helping children to make a positive contribution. They constantly interact with the childminder and co-childminder and the other children present, learning to share and take turns and develop skills for the future. Children benefit from their positive interaction with both the childminders who effectively support children's learning by providing appropriate resources and activities. The childminder is starting to use the insights gained from her observations of what children are doing and learning to plan activities within the premises and in the local community that allow children to make progress and achieve, and enjoy during the time they spend in the childminder's care. Information about children's achievements is shared with parents in a variety of ways including discussion and daily home link books.

Babies enjoy going for walks in their pram and can watch and learn from seeing the natural world and the squirrels, rabbits and birds they see on the way. Children also watch the fish in the childminder's pond being fed, sometimes helping to feed them through the protective safety wire mesh cover, under close supervision. Children have good access to physical play and fresh air, are provided with a varied healthy diet, supplemented with frequent drinks, and personal hygiene routines are robust to help children to develop good personal habits. Policies shared with parents include the sickness policy, so that children do not attend when unwell, and thorough cleaning and nappy changing routines help protect children from the risk of cross-infection. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they see the measures in place, such as the gate to prevent access to the stairs, or as they take part in the fire evacuation drill. Children learn about looking after their environment and help at tidy up time putting toys away to keep a safe floor space for the younger children to move around on safely. Children generally play well together and periodic reminders from the childminder helps them to understand about issues, such as sharing and taking turns. Behaviour incidents are few as the children are busy and engaged, and the childminder praises them frequently to promote their self-esteem and spends lots of time supporting and playing directly with them.

Children are independent but also have the close contact and reassurance of the childminder when required. They snuggle into her arms and sit on her lap while she reads the books they bring to her. Children have some opportunities to play with different resources when attending the toddler groups but there are limited items within the childminder's home environment for children to develop their use of simple programmable toys or technological equipment.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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