

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/01/2010
Inspector	Saida Cummings
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1996 and lives with her family in a residential area situated in Wednesbury, West Midlands. There are local shops, parks, playing fields, daycare settings and schools within walking distance. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and daycare settings. Children are taken on local visits and outings.

All of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. The childminder has procedures to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. She is registered to care for six children at any one time and there are currently five children on roll within the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for older children. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is a member of the local childminding group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy, confident and settled with the childminder. Their learning, development and welfare are exceptionally well promoted, owing to the dedication and commitment of the childminder. Comprehensive steps are taken to ensure children are well integrated within the setting and they are all equally valued and benefit from care that is tailored to meet their individual needs. The effective partnerships with parents, carers and other settings are exemplary. The childminder has introduced systems for self-evaluation, which identify the main strengths and she demonstrates a very good awareness of making continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the self-evaluation documentation further to ensure this tool is fully utilised to demonstrate how continuous development is maintained in all areas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and safety is extremely well promoted in a safe, friendly and homely environment where they are valued as equal individuals. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and the childminder has a very secure

understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and the action she should take in the event of a concern about a child. Adults in the home are suitably vetted and the childminder promotes safety through good levels of supervision for the children as they only use the ground floor of the property. Children's safety is expertly promoted within the home and during outings as the childminder is vigilant in maintaining her risk assessments, ensuring hazards to children are minimised. All areas accessible to the children are thoughtfully organised to allow freedom to explore, direct access to a wealth of freely chosen resources and safe areas in which to play and relax. Clear policies and procedures have been developed to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment and these are effectively put into practice. There are many detailed documents in place which are regularly reviewed and updated, taking into consideration current legislation affecting the care of children.

Children receive high quality care because the childminder has a very good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how young children learn and develop. The childminder has completed Level 2 childcare training and is very experienced. She spontaneously continues her own personal development, attending relevant training in order to raise standards. This helps develop her own skills and enthusiasm and as a result, she is a very effective childcarer. Children are relaxed, show they feel at home and confidently select and make decisions about what they would like to do and play with. They have the freedom to experiment, whilst still knowing that the childminder is always close at hand for assistance if required. The childminder is extremely well organised and effectively manages daily routines to accommodate the individual needs of the children attending. Lots of free play opportunities, and the childminder's responsive approach to children's requests, means they can choose what they want to do throughout the day. Inclusive practice is promoted extremely well as the childminder encourages children's positive self-esteem and respects all children's backgrounds and any specific needs.

The strong partnership with parents and carers is based on effective information sharing. Daily verbal and written communication systems are used to promote positive exchanges of information about children. Close links are built with local schools and other providers so that there is a shared understanding about children's needs and progress. The parents and carers value the care the childminder provides and extremely positive feedback has been received. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection and this reflects the childminder's commitment to making continual improvements to her practice through training and improving her knowledge of current early childhood initiatives. Self-assessment is evident in the childminder's practice and she has a clear vision for high quality and inclusive care. However, the self-evaluation documentation is not yet fully developed to ensure the provider makes full use of this tool to demonstrate how continuous improvements will be maintained in all areas.

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

Children thrive and make excellent progress in their learning and development in relation to their age, ability and starting points. The childminder dedicates all her time to the children and she is exceptionally good at enabling the children to lead the day, supporting them individually to ensure they make rapid progress. She implements ideas into their play and asks them a wealth of questions to encourage their thinking and further extend their learning. For example, whilst children are manipulating the play dough they are able to name the different shapes and count how many shapes they make. The childminder asks them to think what the round red shape reminds them of and they say this is a 'tomato'. This then leads to discussions about the various plants they grew in the summer which included tomatoes. As a result, children are developing their creative and problem solving skills whilst making very good links in their learning.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their skills in communicating, literacy and numeracy. Their language skills are developed through their love of books and story telling, as well as encouragement to join in with relaxed and interesting conversations. For example, they sit with the childminder, relaxing whilst reading and looking at some of their favourite books. The childminder consistently and positively interacts with the children to encourage their involvement and learning, such as encouraging their speech development by skilfully asking them open questions that encourage them to think and extend their vocabulary.

Children's good health and well-being are promoted extremely well as all children have daily opportunities for physical indoor and outdoor activities. They relish playing and exercising in the outdoor fresh air using the wide variety of equipment to develop their physical skills. For example, they skilfully learn to use the age-appropriate outdoor resources to develop their balance, running and jumping skills. Children's awareness of the world around them and the wider society is encouraged through a range of activities and outings. This includes outings within the local community and regular attendance at the various children's groups where they have the opportunity to mix with other children and develop their social skills. Children learn the importance of good hygiene through effective hand washing practice and the childminder has excellent procedures in place to ensure the spread of infection is minimised. Children are kept safe as the childminder ensures they are supervised at all times and discussions are held about how they can keep themselves safe, such as awareness of road safety when going on local walks.

Children are given excellent opportunities to explore and investigate, extend their imagination and creativity. For example, they enthusiastically join in with art and craft sessions, using a variety of resources to create brightly coloured pictures and collages. Their sense of achievement is fostered as their work is displayed or put into their personal learning journals. They love to look through the journals, remembering how they achieved the different art work and talking about what they are doing in the photographs. Children have many opportunities to extend their hand/eye coordination and develop their skills for the future. They eagerly

join in with puzzle games and enjoy using a variety of interactive toys. Innovative strategies are used to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the natural world through interesting topical work. For example, they love to watch the caterpillars whilst they are building their cocoons, fascinated as these creatures slowly change. They are then able to see them emerge as butterflies and have the opportunity to observe them further during the first few days of their lives before helping to release them. Their learning is reinforced through use of appropriate books, such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. As a result, children are building up their understanding of the caterpillars' lifecycle in an interesting and stimulating environment.

The childminder's secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn through play fully supports their development. Children are motivated and eager to learn. Their progress and individual learning is very well documented in individual learning journals. These include photographs which are annotated with accounts of what the child is achieving and learning from the activity. The childminder identifies each child's next stage of development and plans exciting and stimulating activities around each area of learning. As a result, children are animated, well supported and able to develop to their full potential. The childminder has developed exemplary systems to enable parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning. This includes providing them with 'home evidence diaries' and encouraging them to observe and note how their children tackle and achieve various activities and routines. The information gathered is discussed and successfully used to link in with individual children's activity plans at the setting. Consequently, excellent links are made between the setting and the child's home environment. This enables the provider to work closely with parents and carers, which further supports children with making tremendous progress in their learning based on their individual interests and personal experiences.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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