

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY271395
Inspection date	27/04/2010
Inspector	Sonjia Nicholson

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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and 11 years. They live in a house in Hillingdon in the London borough of Hillingdon close to local amenities, such as shops and parks. There is easy access to the A40, M40, M25 and the tube network into London. Children have use of most rooms on the ground floor along with two bedrooms used for daytime naps and a bathroom on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for a maximum of six children under eight years, three of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently four children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. She may, on occasions, work with another registered childminder or an assistant.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds an NVQ Level 3 qualification in Childcare, Learning and Development. She is a member of the Hillingdon Quality Childminding Network, is part of the childminding buddy scheme to help newly registered childminders and a Lead Practitioner for Hillingdon Borough Council sharing good practice with other providers in need of support.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this exciting setting where the childminder meticulously plans specific activities for each child based on her in-depth observations. This ensures children make significant progress during their time with her. She shows an enormous capacity for continuous improvement and is dedicated to increasing her knowledge and creating an exceptionally stimulating environment. Despite no recommendations being raised at her last inspection the childminder has re-designed her parent packs, updated her website and reviewed all written policies. Since her last inspection the childminder has moved house and children now benefit from the opportunity to access the garden easily and have 'free-flow' play throughout the day. The separate rooms are used very effectively, particularly the lounge where children can relax after a busy day at school.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure safeguarding knowledge remains up to date and reflects current procedures.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children play in an extremely safe environment as the childminder has conducted detailed risk assessments of all areas of the home and garden. Consequently, there are few risks to children and they can move and play independently both inside and outside. The childminder fully supervises children and works successfully with her assistant to keep children safe, for example, he helps bring children into the setting from the car after a school run and keeps a watchful eye on them as they play in the garden while the childminder changes a child's nappy. She has a wealth of policies and procedures which clearly show her commitment to safeguarding children, for example, a well-thought-out evacuation drill which she practises each month so children know how to leave the home quickly and safely. As a precaution smoke alarms are fitted on both levels of the home, and there is a carbon monoxide detector and a fire blanket in the kitchen. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the procedures to follow if she has concerns about a child's welfare. She has all the necessary information to refer to and ensures all accidents, concerns and existing injuries to children are recorded in detail. Through the self-evaluation process the childminder has identified the need to complete an up-to-date safeguarding course, particularly in light of some recent highly publicised child protection cases; this will add to her knowledge and boost her confidence further.

The childminder demonstrates exceptional organisational skills and plans all areas of her business to the finest detail. As a result, children are provided with a vast range of learning opportunities where they cover all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and learn skills for the future. Children benefit greatly from the dedication and motivation shown by the childminder who strives to provide a high quality service. Through effective ongoing self-evaluation and an overwhelming desire to make improvements she has formed a strong partnership with the local authority, particularly the network coordinator who offers professional advice and assistance. Her willingness to accept guidance means she has been able to fully embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage and deliver it to an extremely high standard whilst improving the methods used to plan and observe children. Through her work as a Lead Practitioner the childminder is skilled at sharing her knowledge with others to raise the profile of childminding.

Children have access to a superb selection of toys, resources and equipment that are of the highest quality. The childminder spends vast amounts of time researching suitable items, for example, the matting which allows children to safely use the garden all year round. She takes account of children's views and tries to accommodate them, for example, one child asked for a pirate ship climbing frame, but after looking into various options it was agreed she would purchase a more traditional style frame which could be used more flexibly and imaginatively by the children. Children's individual needs are fully supported by the ever-changing learning environment, for example, the childminder has recently set up a garage outside so children can use the toolkits to fix the ride-on toys. There are clipboards with 'car repair forms' for them to complete to encourage all children, but particularly the boys to write for a purpose. She helps children who speak English

as an additional language or who are unable to communicate verbally by using pictures, for example, a 'time-line' of the daily routine so they can see what is going to happen next. Children learn about diversity as they celebrate festivals and events, thus encouraging respect for other cultures and religions. Resources and activities, such as picture books, jigsaw puzzles, food and dance, further consolidate children's understanding of others. Children visit local places of interest to promote an awareness of their own environment, for example, they visit various parks and the library. They also experience visits from professionals like the Police Community Support Officers to discuss stranger danger.

Parents are provided with regular information about their child in the form of daily sheets or a 'Link Book' for babies along with verbal feedback from the childminder. She makes sure observations are shared with parents and takes time to discuss significant milestones face to face or alternatively by e-mail or telephone. Prospective parents receive a pack of useful information about the childminder and she has also set up a website to provide further details of her service. The childminder is very keen to hear parents' views and ensures details of how to make a complaint and suggestion forms are provided for them. She actively encourages them to voice their opinions when she reviews her written policies and when planning menus so children are offered food options they will enjoy. Each parent has an annual review where a specific time is planned to discuss their child and any ideas, suggestions or concerns relating to the setting followed by a questionnaire which they can complete and return. This means parents are very involved in their child's learning and development.

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

Children feel safe within this welcoming home. They relate extremely well to the childminder and her assistant and move freely in the familiar environment where there is a well-established daily routine. For example, they respond well to the small bell used to attract their attention which signals that it is time to come inside for lunch. Children behave in an exemplary manner and play cooperatively with one another. The childminder models positive behaviour and remains calm and relaxed at all times. She gives children responsibilities, for example, helping to set the table for meal times and tidy away the toys so they make a positive contribution to the setting and learn skills for the future. Reward charts are used effectively as an incentive to encourage good behaviour. Children learn excellent hygiene routines; they wash their hands before eating and after playing in the garden to prevent the spread of infection. Children are encouraged to learn about where food comes from by planting potatoes and other vegetables in the garden, tending to them as they grow then harvesting them to eat. They are provided with nutritious meals that are freshly cooked, for example, they devour pasta, meatballs, peas and carrots for their lunch. Children who are able to can access their own refrigerator which contains a variety of healthy snacks, such as peaches, apples, cheese and grapes. The childminder is committed to children having five portions of fruit and vegetables a day as recommended by the Department of Health.

Children benefit greatly from the fact they can access the garden so freely. This means they play in the fresh air and develop their physical skills as they play in the ball pool, push and pedal a selection of ride-on toys, bounce on the trampoline and paint the fence with water. They gain further exercise and practise their physical skills when they visit parks and use large equipment to climb and balance on. Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and she excels in planning and providing activities that cover all areas of learning. This is because she has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children extend their communication and language skills as the childminder engages in high quality interactions with them, for example, she asks a child to name a hot country and recall a previous conversation about the types of clothes worn in hot and cold countries. Children focus on a new phonic sound each week to develop their pre-reading skills. Singing well-known songs and rhymes also encourages children to extend their vocabulary, begin to recognise patterns and increase their memory skills. They have great fun playing a range of musical instruments to songs played on a compact disc and with the childminder accompanying them on the piano. The childminder is involved in a National Strategy called 'Every Child a Talker' to improve her skills and knowledge and raise children's achievements in early language.

Children explore the garden and by doing so develop a good knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, they explore the investigation table containing binoculars, magnifying glasses and a telescope and grow sensory plants, such as lavender and thyme. The childminder has plans to extend the resources already in place and create a dedicated multi-sensory area in the future. Most recently the childminder has focused on activities linked to children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills, particularly to extend these to the outside area. As a result, children can now use the number line, which is hanging on the fence, to count to 20, sort and match pairs of socks on the washing line and follow printed instructions, for example, to 'find 10 flowers'. The childminder clearly enjoys her time with the children and plays on the floor at their level, for example, she uses a hat from the treasure basket to play a hiding game which causes much hilarity amongst the children, so much so that they stop what they are doing to join in too. Children feel valued as the childminder displays their artwork for all to see and they enjoy watching themselves on the slideshow on the television that plays throughout the day. The childminder is meticulous in her planning and follows a theme, for example, 'The Farm'. Many of the activities are linked to the theme although there is plenty of flexibility to enable children to play freely and make their own choices. They have fun feeding the toy sheep and pigs with bottles of milk in the playhouse which has been set up as a farmhouse complete with real hay on the floor. There is also a farm shop to encourage imaginary role play scenarios. Each child has a comprehensive learning journey with observations, photographs and links to the Early Years Foundation Stage which clearly shows the excellent progress they have made along with their next steps in learning. The childminder has made sound links with other providers; she maintains a written record of all contact and views newsletters and planning so that children have a coherent learning experience.

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	1
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

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