

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	126253
Inspection date	11/01/2010
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott

Type of setting	Childminder
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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2000. She lives with her partner and two teenage children in a house in Allington close to the town of Maidstone. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home and one room upstairs are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. When working with her partner, who is a registered childminder, she can care for a maximum of eight children. The childminder is also registered to care for one child overnight. She is currently minding seven children on a part time basis and three of these are in the early years age group. Children with English as an additional language and with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend.

The family have a dog and a cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children benefit from good, sensitive support as they are each valued and treated with patience and respect by the childminder. Children's individuality is recognised and nurtured by the childminder who has a good understanding of their home circumstances, individual needs, interests and abilities. Children benefit from the regular attendance at local groups and outings to local amenities. They are supported by close relationships between the childminder and their parents. Consequently, all children enjoy their time with the childminder because she enables them to develop and learn successfully. The childminder has begun to evaluate her service and identify how she intends to develop and promote the welfare and development of all the children further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make systematic observations and assessments across all six areas of learning and development to identify learning priorities
- provide dual language books to raise awareness of different scripts and to match the languages spoken by families at the setting
- clarify the safeguarding policy to include a procedure to be used in the event of an allegation being made
- obtain training to administer specialist medication from a trained health professional that is specific to the child concerned

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues as she has attended training previously and she makes appropriate arrangements to safeguard children. She shares her policies and procedures with parents so that they are informed about her arrangements, although she has not included information about what to do if an allegation is made. Children are safeguarded by the childminder's procedures for checking that all toys and resources are safe for use and by providing a safe and suitable home environment. Children benefit from an extensive range of appealing toys which cover all areas of learning and all ages and stages of the children. These toys include a selection of resources that reflect diversity in a positive way, although there are few that reflect children's home languages to build upon their sense of identity and understanding. The childminder does offer a very welcoming home environment to all sections of the community so that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities feel a sense of belonging. Children are supervised at all times as the childminder's partner is also a registered childminder. This means that there are very good arrangements to ensure their safety in her care.

The childminder works closely with parents, sharing information about the care she offers, such as displaying a selection of posters which provide information on how to contact the regulator. Records are shared with parents and there is a good exchange of information facilitated through the use of a contact book for younger children if parents would like this. The childminder shares information about children's experiences in her care, including what they have eaten and how long they have slept by documenting this on a daily feedback form. Parents are very pleased with the service they receive; they answer the questionnaires with very positive comments commending the care of their children. The childminder gets to know children's families well and learns about other aspects of their lives; for example, she knows a neighbour's child who she minds built snowman in their garden and she talks about this to them, encouraging a sense of continuity and closeness. The childminder shares the children's individual folders with parents and discusses their development, enabling consistent practice between children's care at home and their care here. The childminder exchanges some information with other agencies, such as pre-schools and the local school, in order to support the children she cares for.

The childminder keeps a variety of information about the needs of the children she cares for and records consents from parents for a variety of activities, such as the administration of medication, although she has not obtained training to administer specialist medication from a health professional. The childminder has begun to evaluate her service and continues to improve what she offers by attending training and implementing improvements.

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

Children enjoy the time they spend with the childminder because they have access to a variety of toys, resources and activities inside the home. The childminder takes children on local outings to the park and to local groups. The childminder has developed a good system using photographs to enable children to choose from her wide selection of attractive and stimulating toys and resources. Flexible plans ensure that activities support all aspects of their development, providing a good balance of freely chosen play, supplemented by adult-led and organised activities.

Children's learning and progress is supported by the childminder who observes and assesses their skills, understanding and abilities. The childminder has begun to record her observations, and is developing a system to reference these to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children's starting points are noted using a form that is completed with parents and the childminder understands how to use the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure they make progress in all areas of their development. The childminder participates in children's play, acknowledging their achievements with praise, which promotes their self-esteem and ensures they feel positively about play and learning. Children are encouraged to behave well, their behaviour is mostly good, and they get on together well. This is facilitated by the childminder's encouragement to relax away from younger children after a day at school by providing the opportunity for older children to use the adjoining conservatory for quiet activities.

Children are supervised and protected by the use of reins and harnesses in buggies when they are taken out. The childminder ensures they learn about keeping safe by enabling them to learn about road safety. Children are cared for in safe environment where good precautions have been taken to limit any hazards. However, one garden fence panel has been blown down and the childminder is arranging for this to be repaired. The dangerous substances are stored in the kitchen cupboards and are secured by a child proof lock. The childminder reviews her risk assessment every month and ensures all items that need regular checks, such as the smoke alarms, are checked. Children are helped to develop a good awareness of safety issues as the childminder ensures they understand how to behave safely when they are out and how to use pedestrian crossings safely. Children are well supervised and protected in the event of an emergency, as the childminder ensures they practise the evacuation plans and has identified where they can all wait for help in safety. The childminder has sought guidance from the local fire officer who has visited and she completed a risk assessment of the premises with regards to fire safety.

Children's health is well protected as the childminder implements good practices to ensure children clean their hands before eating and there are hygienic nappy changing procedures. All children benefit from secure procedures to protect them from infection when they eat, or are changed. The children enjoy freshly cooked meals if they stay for a cooked meal in the afternoon, and they all enjoy nutritionally balanced snacks of fruit and biscuits with frequent drinks of diluted squash or water. This safeguards children and promotes their health.

Good relationships enable children to feel secure in the care of the childminder and these feelings are supported by the positive relationships the childminder has with parents. Children benefit from the visit from a fire engine and their understanding of safety issues is encouraged through the evacuations they practise. Children learn about healthy lifestyles as the childminder encourages them to develop their physical skills through daily outdoor activities, such as walking to school and trips to the park. They enjoy a varied, healthy diet that incorporates fresh fruit and home cooked meals if they stay for the evening meal. Children develop their understanding of the local community and build upon their social skills by attending a rhyme-time group. This also encourages their communication skills and the childminder provides opportunities for them to talk to her and respond to her questions through play experiences. This develops their understanding and skills, as, for example, they learn to count and to identify colours.

Children learn about the natural world as they build a snowman in the garden and their understanding of the seasons is supported through activities such as collecting leaves or decorating the Christmas tree. They enjoy helping to make mince pies, and making the mincemeat which is used for these. Children learn about various celebrations and festivals, making divas at Diwali which helps them to understand the ideas and beliefs of different cultures and religions.

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	2
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

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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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- clarify the safeguarding policy to include a procedure to be used in the event of an allegation being made (Safeguarding) 31/01/2010

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report 31/01/2010