

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/01/2010
Inspector	Cilla Rachel Mullane
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children, both of whom are aged over eight years. The whole ground floor of the property is used for childminding, and there is a downstairs toilet. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder lives within easy reach of the shops, schools, pre-schools, the beach and the park.

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 range. She is currently caring for three children in the early years age range on a part time basis. She is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for children aged over five years, and is caring for seven children in this age range.

The family has a dog.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder shows great empathy with the feelings and needs of young children and their families, which enables her to meet individual needs very effectively. As a result, children thrive, are emotionally secure, laugh frequently and have fun, and make excellent progress in their learning. Children feel extremely safe and secure in her care, developing trusting relationships. Partnership with parents is strong, and they are fully included in their children's care and learning. Activities, both indoors and in the local community, provide children with an extensive variety of experiences and generally good use is made of the garden in winter. The childminder displays a great capacity to maintain continuous improvement, making regular well targeted improvements to her practice to enhance outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of the outdoor environment as an area where children have freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active all year round

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is extremely well organised. All paperwork is clear and concise. She has achieved the Diploma in home based childcare, and has a very positive attitude towards training. She is fully committed to providing a professional

childminding service, recognising that welfare and emotional wellbeing of the children is of paramount importance.

She fully recognises the importance of safeguarding children, and therefore updates her knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures at regular intervals, so that she has the necessary information to act on a child's behalf should she have concerns regarding their welfare. Her risk assessments are thorough, including everything with which children come into contact, and are regularly reviewed, with any action noted.

Records show that children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Regular observations, photographic evidence and planning for children's next steps show that children are enthusiastic learners and achieve well in relation to their starting points.

The childminder reflects on and evaluates her practice carefully, and gains knowledge from regular training, research and discussions with colleagues. She makes excellent use of all of this to improve her practice. For example, she has improved her risk assessments and introduced newsletters for parents. She includes children in any changes by seeking their views on new ideas. Her use of written planning, both long term, and weekly for individual children, enables her to check that her curriculum includes all areas of learning. In addition, she uses her observations of children to make sure that they progress in all aspects of their development.

Children make good use of the environment, confidently and enthusiastically self selecting toys to initiate their own play. For example, they find all the resources they need for a pretend shopping trip, with food, a till and basket, and a visit to the zoo, including elephants and rhinos. The local environment is also well used: children remember the tigers at Howletts Zoo, and choose books at the library. Outings, and resources such as toy figures which represent the wider world well, and which are discussed during play, help children to learn to respect others, and develop positive attitudes towards diversity in our society. Good use is made of the enclosed garden in the summer, and the childminder plans to improve children's ability to play outside in all weathers by changing the grass to a patio.

Parents receive detailed information regarding their child's day in informative contact books. This includes the long term planning, and detailed planning for that particular child. Therefore parents are able to continue children's learning at home, and add ideas of their own. Parents have plenty of opportunity to comment on their children's progress and observations in their individual folders. They are fully apprised of all plans for the future via newsletters, and their comments and views in references are valued. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively, shared and updated with parents, and are inclusive for the children who attend. Parents express immense satisfaction with the childminding setting. They especially appreciate the superb communication via contact books and picture messages, the safe welcoming environment, and the extent to which children are learning about right and wrong, and the value of sharing and respecting one another.

Effective liaison with other settings attended by children results in the childminder having a thorough knowledge of how children are getting on, so that she can support them as needed, and provide continuity of care.

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

The children flourish in this environment because the childminder is experienced, dedicated to their care and helps them learn through the provision of challenging and interesting activities. They enjoy their play greatly, laughing out loud as the childminder paints and tickles their hands, and saying 'I want to do it again!', and 'I want to do your ones now, it is funny!' They quickly accomplish the art of blowing paint with straws to make a 'wind picture', saying 'Let's do it again!'

Children concentrate and persevere well, according to their ages, and take pride in their work. They enjoy role play for extensive periods of time, pretending to go shopping, taking the baby, driving in the car, and taking the baby to the zoo. The childminder is very skilled at supporting and extending their play, introducing new ideas, or allowing children to lead and use their imaginations. The childminder skilfully introduces many learning opportunities and positive attitudes into role play: she helps children think about safety when pretending to fasten seat belts, they talk about buying healthy food, they think about kindness to others when whispering reassurance to the doll who is frightened of tigers, the importance of fresh air for the baby is discussed and they think about how others feel when the baby is hungry and cries.

Children behave very well, due to the childminder's wonderful understanding of their needs and feelings. Children are starting to understand and express their feelings: the childminder helps young children to understand 'happy' and 'sad' during role play, when discussing how a hungry baby might feel. Reward charts successfully promote good behaviour, and all children are included so that no one feels singled out. Children are helped to be kind to one another, again through role play when the tiger is asked to be kind to the baby. Children have excellent self esteem due to the childminder's frequent praise, and she shows their work is appreciated when she asks them to hold up their pictures for a photograph. They also confidently take photographs of their own work, quickly mastering the new camera.

Children are developing positive skills for the future. They become very independent, making choices throughout the day as the childminder offers alternatives for snacks, choices of toys or activities. Their language and reasoning skills are good, as the childminder models thinking aloud: 'what do you think my picture might need ...?'

Children's security and feeling of safety is of paramount importance, and the childminder is extremely sensitive towards children's feelings. She skilfully helps children through times of change in their lives, such as the transition from day-care to school, and as a result, children gain in confidence and cope with change. Small children happily include her in their role play games, sometimes leading the

game and organising the childminder's role, showing that they feel very secure in her company. Children are kept safe during outings, and have a sense of belonging, as they wear the same hats with the childminder's contact number, and wrist bands. Furthermore, the childminder effortlessly includes aspects of safety into play: for example, children know that they need to strap their babies into their seats carefully in a pretend car journey to the zoo.

Young children know about eating healthy food, and point to a poster depicting fruit by the dining table: they name their favourite fruits, and describe how they ate kiwi fruit at snack time, showing that they are starting to understand the importance of healthy eating. During role play, they buy broccoli and carrots, again showing an interest in healthy vegetables. They remember growing and picking tomatoes on the childminder's allotment, and using them to make soup, and so understand where vegetables come from. They are learning about personal hygiene as the childminder helps them to wash paint of their hands, and after visiting the toilet state 'wash hands again!'

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	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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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