

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/10/2009
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
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 1994. She lives with her husband in the Willaston area of Nantwich. Most areas of the property are used for childminding purposes. There is a secure garden available for outdoor play. Family pets include one cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, three of whom may be in the early years age range. She operates all year round. There are currently five children on roll aged from eight months to 12 years. Of these, two are within the early years age range. The care for children aged over five years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is able to support children with special educational needs.

The childminder holds an appropriate level three qualification in Early Years and regularly attends a number of toddler groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder warmly meets the unique needs of each child. She skilfully establishes genuinely close bonds with each child, providing a varied and stimulating day and emotional security so that they make good developmental progress. Children are well safeguarded because the childminder is vigilant and uses her risk assessments to effectively maintain safety both in and out of the home. Partnerships with parents are informative and child centred, although links with other involved child carers are underdeveloped. The childminder uses self-evaluation forms and training to identify and undertake areas for improvement which build upon her already good provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make regular summary assessments of children's progress under the six areas of learning, using the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Practice Guidance, which can be used to show progress and plan for next steps
- ensure continuity of care and coherence in learning programmes for each child by sharing relevant information with any other providers of the EYFS or specialist help.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder safeguards children well because she is vigilant and adopts safe practices, provides a safe environment, and uses policies and procedures which support safety both in day to day and emergency situations. For example, she ensures that babies are safely seated in a high chair if she is not free to sit on the floor with them or pick them up. Her procedures for emergencies, child protection, complaints and lost or uncollected children are effective and all adults living in the household were vetted when the childminder first registered. Any accidents or medication administration are properly recorded and parents give their consent to the arrangements for emergencies and outings. Risk assessments for the home, garden and outings prompt regular action, for example to remove foxgloves which self seed in the garden or to replace smoke alarm batteries. However, actions taken following each use of the outings risk assessments are not always logged.

The childminder is qualified in childcare and chooses ongoing training which will most benefit her service and the welfare of children. For example, she has undertaken a number of courses relating to speech, language and communication. In addition, EYFS training has helped her to competently make lively and detailed written and photo observations of children's progress. She makes good use of play resources and her own individual skills and experience, showing good insight into her strengths and ability to provide good quality individualised care. She makes close, nurturing bonds, similar to a grandparent relationship. She aims to maintain her grading as a good quality childminder and has made some use of the Ofsted self-evaluation form. However, she finds it more effective to seek advice and feedback through undertaking training and discussion with other childminders. She has acted upon recommendations made at previous inspections, including making wider use of natural, recyclable and household materials which children can use in diverse ways. She keeps up to date with changes; and intermittently reviews her policies, although some relevant contact numbers are out of date.

The childminder is committed to partnership with parents and verbally shares children's interests, achievements and her plans for their development in a way which is both supportive and sensitive. First time parents state in writing their appreciation of her support, advice and help with all aspects of their child's learning and development. However, only the photographic part of the learning and development record is presently shared with parents. The childminder has worked cooperatively with providers of special services to ensure that children receive specialist help where required, for example, with speech. However, two way exchange of individual children's plans and progress with key workers and reception teachers is underdeveloped for children in the EYFS because all parties have not given this priority. This somewhat holds back the provision of complimentary and consistent care to maximise children's progress.

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

The childminder supports each child's learning and development well, using her training, experience and warmth to the full. She provides a good quality, varied, safe learning environment indoors. They dress up, role play, bake and enjoy arts and crafts. Children also enjoy complimentary play and experiences outdoors which enhance their physical and social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, they make dens and camps, visit soft play and toddler groups, and collect fallen leaves to use. Activities are enjoyable and challenging, with clear intentions for children's progress. For example, the childminder is focusing on encouraging an eight month old to begin crawling and talking. To do this she spends one to one time talking or singing to the baby, stimulating all senses, using musical toys and the feel and taste of different objects in the treasure basket. She makes the floor area safe and soft, placing favourite objects a little way away to encourage the baby to move towards them.

The childminder's observation notes are linked to the areas of learning, confirming that every area is being provided for through different activities. However, she is not matching her observations to the expectations of the early learning goals shown in the Practice Guidance to the EYFS for the age and stage of each child. She does not yet summarise children's stage of development upon entry or their progress over periods of time. Nevertheless, children's progress is good because they are so well nurtured and supported and their particular needs are fully known and respected. The childminder has particular skill to develop communication, language and literacy and compliments the care children at pre school and reception class are receiving. For example, she reads or undertakes quiet games with children when they are tired from physical and social play at pre school or school. Toys, crafts and pictures provide a rich, positive image of our diverse world, as well as chances to learn about disability through role play situations, stories, puzzles or small world toys.

The childminder teaches children in an age appropriate way how to take responsibility for their own health, safety and well being. She ensures that her home and her day to day practice prevent both the spread of infection and accidents. She teaches children how to play safely and appropriately with the pet cat or the young babies attending. Children are given time to be independent and work things out for themselves, such as breaking off their own paper towel to dry their hands in the kitchen before meals or looking both ways before crossing the roads. Similarly, they make choices for themselves, adapting the see saw to make a bench, or making a cup of tea using the role play kitchen. Children are encouraged to develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners through the calm and kind example of the childminder. They enjoy regular social time with children of their own age at toddler groups and the children's centre. Close bonds are made between minded children of all ages, particularly after school, and children are kind and considerate of one another. They enjoy parties and celebrations together and are extremely secure because they receive consistency and unlimited affection and cuddles from the childminder.

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	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	2
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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:	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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