

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	16/11/2009
Inspector	Marina Anna Howarth
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 1994. She lives with her partner and daughter aged 19 years in Norden, near Rochdale. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, with toilet facilities located on the first floor. Sleeping and resting are accommodated in the second and third bedroom and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outside play. There is one step leading to the premises.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children under five years during the day and one child over five years before and after school and in the school holidays. Currently there are eight children on roll. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group and takes children to the local library and park. The childminder holds an National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Early Years Childcare.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Highly effective procedures and practices ensure the safety and the welfare of the children. The excellent partnerships established with parents and external agencies ensure that a high level of consistency is maintained and children's individual needs are supported effectively. Children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities because the childminder knows them well and skilfully plans activities to meet their needs. An inclusive service is provided, ensuring children are respected and valued and, as a result, children thrive in the warm, caring, vibrant environment. A robust self-evaluation process enables the childminder to continually reflect on her service, ensuring continuous improvement is effective.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to promote the importance and value of the outdoor environment by providing a variety of activities and experiences covering the six areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively protected as the childminder has a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues. She has attended regular training and is confident in implementing the appropriate procedures, should any concerns arise. She has robust policies and procedures in place which are reflective of the setting's practice and shared with parents. The childminder ensures that all children's safety remains paramount through effective processes, such as ensuring children are never left unsupervised with persons who have not been vetted. Extensive risk assessments for all areas of the childminder's home, resources and individual outings ensure children's safety is protected. Children display an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe through discussions, participating in regular fire drills, practising road safety and tidying up after themselves.

The childminder implements an effective self-evaluation process. As a result, rigorous and extensive monitoring enables her to devise exceptionally well-targeted plans. The childminder is totally committed to developing her practice on a continual basis to improve future outcomes for children. She has effectively implemented the Early Years Foundation Stage into her setting and has attended a wealth of training, where the knowledge gained has been implemented into her practice. She has identified further development is required for outdoor play provision, as although the children currently participate in a wealth of experiences, she plans to offer more variety and challenges in line with the six areas of learning. Children are actively involved in all plans and decisions made as the childminder involves them in regular discussions and takes note of their interests.

Parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress and they are involved in their children's learning. Robust communication systems, such as a detailed induction process, daily diaries, newsletters, questionnaires and an informative noticeboard, ensure communication is maintained on a productive level. As a result, the childminder knows individual children exceptionally well and is able to meet their needs effectively. A high level of consistency is maintained for the children as the childminder works competently with external agencies, such as the local school, community dental nurse and Sure Start centres. As a result, all children's learning, development and welfare are successfully promoted.

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

Children have excellent opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities and experiences which help to promote their health and well-being and develop their understanding of healthy lifestyles. The childminder's excellent understanding of nutrition results in children being offered a variety of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Children enjoy participating in activities where they are introduced to new food, such as 'dragon fruit' where they explore texture, smell and taste. They visit the local baker's shop and sample a variety of different bread and make their own bread afterwards. Children are aware of their own personal hygiene, such as

washing their hands before they handle food and after visiting the toilet. Younger children are encouraged to wash themselves and be aware when their nose requires wiping. The childminder also encourages children to be aware of their hygiene when they are on outings as she takes hand gel and wet wipes, which they are supported to use. They are given daily opportunities to experience fresh air and exercise. They go on nature walks, where they collect conkers, observe toadstools and wildlife, and explore space. They develop their motor skills as they balance, climb and crawl through tunnels and their hand and eye coordination as they roll a large silver ball to each other and study their reflection.

Children are eager to attend the setting and make significant gains in their learning. They have consistently good and often excellent levels of achievement. Clearly defined starting points identify where children are at when they commence the setting. The childminder invests time with the parents and the children and identifies the next steps in learning. Robust planning systems are individualised for each child attending the setting, identifying their goals and ensuring they are realistic, challenging and achievable. The childminder's flexible approach to planning activities ensures their interests are incorporated, making play more enjoyable and meaningful to them. The childminder ensures that all six areas of learning are covered when planning play activities, and spontaneous and focused observations are linked clearly to the six areas of learning, identifying any gaps. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and have regular access to their child's learning journals in which they write their own comments.

Children demonstrate a strong exploratory impulse as they take an active interest in activities that are located at a low level and clearly labelled. They move with confidence and are focused on what they are doing. They enjoy looking at books together and the childminder uses story sacks to make story time interactive and more visually exciting. Books are available throughout the day as there is a designated book area, enabling children to discover that print has meaning. Children discover the life cycle of a caterpillar as they create a habitat and observe caterpillars changing into butterflies. They use magnifying glasses and study a variety of bugs and insects, happily counting the legs on the spider and identifying that the ant is small and a bee makes a 'buzz' sound. All children investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses, such as through playing with straw, soil, sand and water, and feeling natural objects like brushes, sponges, stones, cones and bark. They enjoy having access to a wide variety of activities, enabling them to use their senses to feel, touch, listen and smell. Young children discover the contents in the box as they remove the lid and 'rummage' inside. They enjoy opening the flaps to discover a mirror in which they look at themselves. Children are actively encouraged to develop their confidence with creative play as their favourite toys are set out in green mashed potato to offer texture and variety. Children learn about numbers as they access a variety of liquid and sparkle numerals and identify each number correctly. They also hold up the correct number of fingers, for example, they find the number five and hold up five fingers, and do the same with numbers one to four. They learn about weights and measurements as they weigh out ingredients whilst baking and the childminder introduces numbers into everyday situations.

All children are valued and engage in a wide range of activities and experiences,

which help them to value diversity. For example, through the celebration of festivals and having access to resources which depict positive images of disability, race and culture. Their behaviour is exemplary as clear boundaries are defined. Older children are actively involved in creating their own rules and younger children are learning about routines, sharing and socialising. Children exhibit a strong sense of positive self-esteem as the childminder converses with them calmly and respectfully. They are given continual praise and recognition and awarded with 'good news' stickers illustrating their achievement.

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