

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/11/2009
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and 15 years. The family live in the Elworth area of Sandbach. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom are used for childminding purposes. There is a secure garden available for outdoor play. Family pets include one dog and 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 10 children on roll aged from one year to nine years. Of these, six are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The care for children aged over five years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder has completed required basic childminding training and is presently undertaking a level 3 qualification in Early Years.

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 extremely well for their health, confidence and independence. She successfully identifies children's stage of development and helps them to make good progress by planning activities and offering choices which interest them. Children are well safeguarded because the childminder applies up-to-date knowledge and teaches children effectively how to be safe in and out of the home. Partnerships with parents and in the wider context are generally good. Professional training and commitment secure the childminder's already good provision, although quality assurance tools are not yet used.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use the Ofsted self-evaluation form and quality improvement processes as the basis of ongoing review to identify and prioritise improvements to the quality of the provision
- ensure that risk assessments work to identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, including the garden
- extend the arrangements with parents for jointly establishing children's starting points and initial priorities for the next steps in their development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder safeguards children well because she is vigilant, teaches children from an early age how to play safely, and uses training, policies and procedures which support safety both in day-to-day and emergency situations. For example, she records how effective fire evacuation plans are and keeps all the current contact details to hand for each child's emergency contacts as well as the local emergency and safeguarding services. She reviews her outings risk assessment each time they go out and conducts a thorough risk assessment of the home. She has mislaid her detailed garden risk assessment but she conducts visual checks of the home and garden each day. The risk assessment does not highlight what needs checking daily. Medication administration and accidents and injuries are properly recorded and consents for any necessary emergency medical treatment are in place for the children in the EYFS age group.

The childminder puts her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice well and chooses ongoing training which will most benefit the welfare of children. For example, she is currently undertaking professional childcare training to level 3 and self-evaluation training currently. Her records of the children's individual progress are detailed and used well to plan activities based upon children's individual interests and their development requirements. She makes good use of diverse and heuristic play resources and her own skills and experience, weaving challenge in all the six areas of learning. She provides an excellent role model for teaching children to understand and respect each other's differences and family circumstances. The childminder shows good insight into her strengths and ability to provide good quality individualised care. She has acted upon recommendations made at previous inspections and takes a clear lead in sharing good practice ideas with other childcarers who attend the same toddler groups as she does. However, she does not yet make use of quality assurance tools to focus her reviews or future plans.

The childminder is committed to partnership with parents and establishes strong bonds with them so that they have immense confidence in her skills. Questionnaires, newsletters, displayed planning, home communication books and sharing of the progress files are all tools to support warm, positive and informative verbal feedback. Parents share their child's starting points and spend as long as they like on settling in arrangements, although a joint assessment of starting points does not form the start of the child's record. Together, the adults know exactly how children are progressing and are usefully sharing this with other childcare providers, such as pre-schools and school reception classes. As a result, children receive consistent care and make good progress, even when they are only placed with the minder for a short time while she covers a colleague's leave.

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

The childminder supports each child's learning and development with skill and enthusiasm. She achieves what she calls 'sensible, practical play' where children quickly learn social and self-help skills which bring confidence, self-esteem and the ability to solve problems and understand their world. Children benefit enormously from playing with children of varying ages because the childminder teaches them how to consider each other's different needs. For example, she shows and tells the baby how to touch the toddler's hair and face gently while she is having her nappy changed. She involves the toddler completely in her nappy change routine, allowing her to wear gloves too and fold and put away her changing mat into the bag. Children have an outstanding knowledge of how to maintain their own health because the childminder explains why, helps and allows time for children to use wipes, wash hands, clean teeth, drink water from an open cup and make healthy meal and snack choices. 'Rubba-dub-dub, all clean!' says a toddler, copying the childminder as they use the evaporating hand wash together. The childminder keeps a clean and safe learning environment indoors and out, but also teaches children not to touch 'my special' which are plants or ornaments within reach. She reminds the toddlers not to hurt the crawling baby by rushing around and she explains why they need to wait for the toast and beans to cool. Household dangers, such as hot light bulbs, are discussed and the childminder shows children how things like the touch base lamp work.

Weekly plans cover children's individual needs and include parents' input, for example, more letter and number work for a pre-school child; the continuing of clear boundaries and a sticker reward system for the two-year-olds to maintain good behaviour; and more wooden natural materials and push-button toys to encourage a baby's hand-to-eye coordination. All the areas of learning are incorporated during each week, tailored to each child's learning preferences. For example, numeracy is being developed through role playing shops for one child and number counting rhymes for others. Children enjoy adult-led activities, such as an exotic fruit tasting activity combined with learning about the countries where the fruits come from. They also have a great deal of free choice and involvement in day to day routines. They choose stories, role plays, pasta play and simple chasing games before they prepare for lunch time and have sleeps or quiet times afterwards. They also greatly enjoy various outdoor play and experiences and social and active toddler groups. Activities are challenging, with clear intentions for children's progress. For example, the childminder eats the same food with the children and uses meal times as an opportunity to talk about healthy eating choices, children's different likes and dislikes, their families and home, and developing table manners and using 'please' and 'thank you'. She gently encourages children to wipe their hands and faces. She shows them their clean faces in a mirror and gives ample praise and love, encouraging children to be kind and hug each other too. As a result, children are immensely secure and their skills for the future and ability to make a positive contribution are developing excellently.

Children behave well and are involved in all aspects of the life of the childminder's home. They look forward to the older ones coming home and going to meet the

children from school. They hug and comfort each other when one is upset and they love to look at each other's photographs. Links with their own homes and families are constantly made clear, for example, toddlers and pre-school children who get three stickers become a star for the day and get their photographs taken for mummy and a marble in the jar at home too. Adults are working together to provide consistent care. The childminder has particular skill to develop communication, language and literacy and complements the care children receive at pre-school and reception class. For example, she reads, sings or undertakes quiet games with children when they are tired from physical and social play at pre-school or school. She shares her plans, observations and summaries of children's progress and takes care to complement what each child is doing in other settings. She models clear speech, explains everything that is happening in an age appropriate way, and uses simple eye contact and signing to help babies develop communication. Reference books, 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. Similarly, children are learning how to look after their world by recycling and not wasting resources.

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	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