

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/11/2009
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 1993. She lives with her husband and their grown-up son in a house in Redbourn, Hertfordshire. The childminder uses the ground floor of the property for the main childminding activities and an upstairs bedroom for children requiring undisturbed sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. 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 five children in the early years age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family has a pet dog.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This childminder has enthusiastically embraced the spirit and intention of the Early Years Foundation Stage and her professional commitment and dedication enables her to offer an excellent standard of care and education to the children. Children clearly thrive and make rapid progress in this family setting that truly recognises their uniqueness and individuality. The childminder meets the diverse needs of children and ensures that children participate in all activities in a fully inclusive way. Through rigorous reflective practice, the childminder identifies and promptly acts upon any areas for improvement thus demonstrating an outstanding capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhancing further, the existing system for monitoring the quality of provision.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children enjoy an exemplary quality of care and education in this setting, supported by exceptionally well-organised and individualised policies, procedures and records. The childminder holds very strong views about quality childcare and ensures that all adults undergo appropriate checks to secure children's safety. The childminder demonstrates an extremely good understanding of the procedures regarding the safeguarding of children and a very high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. A very clear complaints procedure is in place and robust risk assessment is carefully recorded and consistently monitored. Consequently, dangers are minimised and children's safety is secured. Ongoing

explanations from the childminder and regular discussions about safety issues, help children build up their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, children are able to explain that they must carry scissors with the pointed ends towards the ground.

The childminder demonstrates an infectious enthusiasm for her work and is highly motivated to make changes that drive improvement and improve the outcomes for children. She has embraced the spirit of the Early Years Foundation Stage and has applied herself to the task of developing the children's 'Learning Journey' records with increasing enthusiasm and substantial success. The childminder uses the professional expertise of some parents working as teachers to help her take to develop her reflective practice and self-evaluation processes. Consequently, the childminder is committed to enhancing her self-evaluation form to secure her outstanding capacity to improve. The childminder values the benefits of continuing professional development and regularly attends training courses to extend her skills and support further improvement in her practice.

The childminder's exemplary understanding of anti-discrimination means that she provides a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. She ensures that she understands each child's background, cultures and beliefs. She uses this knowledge when she encourages children to recognise differences, offering them information about other ways of life and encouraging them to respect diversity. The learning environment is organised and arranged in an outstanding way that facilitates learning in an exceptionally conducive environment. The childminder makes really good use of the extensive range of high quality resources. Her home is very welcoming and resources are well-organised and accessible, enabling children to make independent choices about their play. For example, the utility room provides a welcoming and practical entrance point with individual coat pegs for children's belongings. Information for parents and carers is displayed on the walls and cupboard doors. Robust partnership work actively contributes to support children's welfare in this vibrant and safe setting. Parents are continuously consulted about their views and write overwhelmingly positive comments in their questionnaires. For example, they highly commend the childminder's ability to instil confidence in their parenting skills, to be demonstrably affectionate with the children as babies and to be gently consistent as the children go through their testing toddler and teenage years. Children's views are actively sought and their suggestions are valued and acted upon.

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

Children make rapid progress in all areas of learning and are exceptionally well-supported in achieving because the childminder has a highly secure understanding of children's development and the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder is highly skilled at drawing the learning from child-led play. For example, she checks children's capabilities of linking sounds and letters on a puzzle and comments that the puzzle is too easy for them. She encourages them to choose a more challenging puzzle and provides excellent support by discussing the shapes and numbers on it. The education programme is extremely well-organised,

collating information from other providers with themes and activities tailored to the interests and abilities of the children in attendance. These cover all aspects of the early learning goals, ensuring children enjoy a broad, stimulating variety of activities and are designed to meet each child's developmental needs. The planning folder clearly shows that planning is flexible and tailored to interests of children and contains resources and examples of children's work. For example, the theme for October includes autumn and Halloween. Children explore the season, looking at what happens to the trees, the grass, the environment and the animals. They go on an autumn walk looking at different sorts of leaves, their colours, textures, shapes and the trees they came from. Children explore the weather in the autumn and the way in which it turns colder. They look at autumn vegetables, harvest festival traditions and participate in Halloween crafts ready for their exciting party.

Children clearly enjoy learning and are enthusiastic to try new challenges. recently, children have been looking at the moon and observing it's different stages of waxing and waning. Children decorate pictures of crescent moons, half moons and full moons. They enjoy a wide range of fun activities linked to monthly topics. For example, during the inspection, children put the finishing touches to their models of space aliens. The childminder extends their vocabulary and understanding by introducing the word 'bristles' and talking about washing the glue brushes before they go stiff in the air. Resulting from the space topic, some children have drawn pictures of the planets and have chosen to write a few descriptive words about them. The childminder has thoughtfully sequenced their drawings and writing about in order of the universe and these are proudly displayed from the ceiling and cupboards in the utility room.

Exceedingly well-documented observations, very closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage, are maintained on all children prior to starting school. From her individual knowledge and observation of the children in her care, she identifies possible lines of learning and ensures these are clearly included on the following week's plan. Plans identify clear learning intentions, based upon the 'Development Matters' criteria in the Practice Guidance and children's achievements are observed sensitively and evaluated effectively to identify the next steps in learning. Regular discussion with parents keep them very well-informed of their child's development and children progress extremely well with very high levels of achievement in relation to their age and stage of development. The childminder is working in an effective manner to narrow the achievement gap, taking account of different learning styles and using these to support individual development.

Children benefit from a mixture of outdoor healthy lifestyle accompanied by a balance of learning and enjoyment within the home. Good use is made of outdoor areas to offer children an extended range of opportunities. They are offered opportunities to exercise and extend their physical skills as they play in the communal garden, visit parks and walk to and from the local schools and nurseries. Children learn to keep themselves safe and healthy, enjoy a wide variety of foods and make rapid progress with speech and social skills. The highest priority is given to children's safety. When accidents happen parents are informed promptly, relevant paperwork is always filled out and copies presented to them. The childminder successfully develops the activities, and offers a broad, stimulating

range that offer challenge to children of all ages. This has a very positive impact as the children have learnt to work together and respect each other, thereby effectively improving overall the early years provision and outcomes for children. This childminder has a positive and focused manner which rubs off on the children, allowing them to discover their independence whilst being aware of the rules and what is acceptable and unacceptable. The needs of children are fully met.

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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