

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	06/10/2009
Inspector	Jill Nugent
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 registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and three children, aged eight, 11 and 14 years, in a house in Cheshunt. Access to the house is at ground level via a short footpath. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is a secure garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat, two rabbits and three guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for a maximum of four children under eight, of whom three may be in the early years age group, at any one time. Currently she is minding three children, two of whom are in the early years and one who is on the voluntary Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a variety of play activities and outings that enable children to engage in appropriate learning experiences and develop useful skills. She promotes their welfare effectively, implementing her health and safety policy in practice so that children feel safe in her care. She adopts an inclusive approach, working closely with parents and other professionals to meet children's care needs. By attending further training she is able to continually develop her practice and thereby improve the outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the system of observational assessment in order to plan more effectively to meet children's individual learning needs
- ensure that risk assessments are reviewed when the need arises to make sure that potential hazards on the premises are kept to a minimum
- develop the use of self-evaluation in order to enable reflection on all aspects of the practice and to guide continuing improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder makes good use of her experience in childcare to offer children appropriate care and individual attention. She recently completed a level three National Vocational Qualification in childcare which has helped to increase her knowledge and understanding of the principles of childcare. There are good procedures in place with regard to the safeguarding of all children. The childminder ensures that she has up to date knowledge concerning child protection so that she can seek advice if she has any concerns about children. Her records are well-

maintained and all the required policies are in place. She has conducted a risk assessment of the premises, and also for regular outings, to show how she minimises risks so that children keep safe. However, she has not reviewed the risk assessment of the premises during the present building works to show how she is continuing to ensure children are safe.

The childminder has a range of colourful and attractive resources stored in containers so that they are easily accessible to children. The playroom is comfortable for indoor play and the large back garden offers a stimulating environment with a variety of outdoor play equipment. The childminder organises her provision around a daily routine, keeping children under general supervision whilst encouraging their personal independence. She encourages children to feel valued and included by involving them in tasks and helping them to learn about other children's needs. She works closely with parents and professionals to give extra support to children when necessary, sometimes initiating this liaison herself. Her written diaries provide a useful account of each child's day and act as link books so that she can exchange information with parents on a daily basis. She develops close relationships with parents and they appreciate the quality of care provided for their children.

The childminder is beginning to evaluate areas of her practice and has developed her paperwork and background knowledge through further study. Since her previous inspection she has updated her first aid qualification and is interested in attending further training to continually improve her practice. She demonstrates a very good understanding of children's different needs and how to respond to these in practice. She takes parents' views into account in caring for children and also offers her own suggestions to improve the outcomes for children. She is aware of children's favourite activities and follows up their interests accordingly. By reflecting on her practice she is able to highlight some aspects for further development, although she is not using self-evaluation effectively to monitor and evaluate all aspects of her practice.

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

Children enjoy opportunities for free choice play activities, showing interest in the resources on offer and enjoying conversation with the childminder. She promotes their learning as she talks and plays with them, supporting children in the development of appropriate skills. For example, young children enjoy role play, drawing and puzzles. They develop communication skills as they ask and answer questions, thereby making connections within the environment. They acquire new vocabulary and develop problem solving skills as they count and mix ingredients for baking. Babies explore toys happily sitting in a low chair or lying on a play mat. The childminder encourages their exploration by providing a variety of interesting toys within reach. In these ways, she encourages children to become active learners.

Children are progressing well in their learning. The childminder has introduced a system of observational assessment which enables her to make notes of their

progress in each learning area. Her daily diaries also include comments on children's development so that parents can be involved in their children's learning. For example, children extend their skills through sharing books, and becoming involved in music and construction activities. They find out about the natural environment on trips to the shops and garden centre. At the childminder's home they help to look after the pets and grow plants, such as tomatoes, or take part in creative activities using different materials. The childminder makes good use of her recorded observations to move children on in their learning, although the system is not yet sufficiently well established to be fully effective in planning for individual children's learning.

Children are happy in the setting and feel secure in the childminder's care. She prioritises their well-being, ensuring that they are safe and healthy. Children learn to look after the toys and to play safely. They develop much self-confidence when talking to the childminder and like her reassurance as she calmly answers their questions. They learn to adopt healthy lifestyles, such as good hygiene practices. They eat according to parents' wishes, bringing their own meals from home. The childminder gently encourages children to eat by sitting with them and offering help. She is firm in her approach to behaviour management so that children learn to behave responsibly. She explains issues clearly to children to help them understand. They benefit from good opportunities for outdoor play, encouraging them to enjoy fresh air and exercise.

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	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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