

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	06/10/2009
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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 16 years and nine years in their house in Dunstable. The childminder uses the whole of the property for childminding, and 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. When working with an assistant, the maximum number of children is increased to seven. She is currently minding four 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 have two pet rabbits. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in this family home environment where the childminder uses her substantial experience to effectively promote most aspects of children's care and education in a suitably inclusive manner. Every child is valued as a unique individual and children make good progress in their learning and development. Basic observation and assessment systems are in place but are not yet sufficiently linked to the Practice Guidance. The childminder builds very positive relationships with parents and other professionals involved in the lives of children to underpin their welfare. She has not yet begun to use self-evaluation as a process for identifying strengths and weaknesses in her provision to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure in respect of every person aged 16 or over who lives on the premises on which childcare is provided
- develop use of the Practice Guidance document to secure children's progress and identify next steps
- develop a system for monitoring the quality of provision and to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children experience a good quality of care and education in this family home, supported by clear policies and procedures and all required written records.

Children's welfare is properly safeguarded by the childminder who has a confident knowledge of local safeguarding procedures. However, she has not been proactive in obtaining an appropriate vetting check for every household member. Good quality risk assessments are in place and effective action is taken to manage or eliminate risks for children. All activities involve all the children at their individual developmental level and the childminder actively involves parents and carers in the promotion of children's positive attitudes to diversity. For example, families contribute items of ethnic dress for the dressing-up boxes. The childminder makes effective and efficient use of a broad range of high quality resources, using the space in her home to provide a cosy area for children to relax and enjoy books, television or computer programs. Toys are easily accessible in the conservatory and children can take themselves into the garden in all weathers to play on the extensive range of equipment and the trampoline.

Planning of daily routines is appropriately flexible and responsive to the needs of children. The childminder demonstrates a competent working knowledge and understanding of child development and provides assessment information in line with the requirements whenever parents and carers request this. The childminder takes note of each child's achievements to assess how to help them to progress onto the next stage of their learning. The childminder is generally able to demonstrate the progress which children make, but observations and assessments are not yet sufficiently matched to the Practice Guidance to fully secure their progress.

Extremely effective verbal communication strategies demonstrate the value placed upon partnership working by the childminder who makes every effort to keep parents fully apprised of all matters relating to their child's care and welfare. Children's individual needs are discussed in depth with parents at the pre-placement stage and re-visited regularly during daily conversations with parents and carers. The childminder has not begun to use the self-evaluation form to monitor her practice, identify any weaknesses and sustain continuous improvement.

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

Happy children learn and develop in this relaxed environment where age-appropriate toys and resources are educational and support learning. Children develop independence and the ability to make choices and decisions because they can play safely and independently in both the house and garden. They can easily access the wide and varied range of equipment stored in the playroom. The childminder skilfully draws the learning from child-led play, sustaining a high quality of interaction with the children which develops positive attitudes to learning. For example, the childminder uses children's interest in plastic fruit and vegetables to explore vocabulary and stimulate discussion about healthy eating as children play the 'food game' with her. She invites children to locate various food items, such as a 'corn on the cob' and asks questions to stimulate discussion.

Children evidently enjoy a wide range of activities which cover the six areas of

learning. They form friendships with other children and learn to adapt their behaviour to different events, social situations and changes in routine. The childminder ensures that children have plentiful opportunities to paint, draw and enjoy messy play. Children help their childminder to care for the rabbits and talk about their lives at home. The childminder actively promotes inclusion and uses books, toys, puzzles and festivals to celebrate differences. Consequently, children experience a meaningful range of activities and resources, which promote a positive view of the world and increase their understanding of other cultures and disabilities.

Children stay healthy and have daily fresh air and exercise because they play in the well-equipped garden on a daily basis and usually walk to and from the local school. Children enjoy 'reward time' at the local park. Suitable documentation is maintained relating to accidents, medication and incidents and clear, robust, procedures are in place, protecting the children's health and well-being. The children learn about keeping safe inside and outside of the home because the childminder provides age-appropriate explanations as to why they must practise a fire drill or take extra care at the top of a slide. Children's behaviour is managed well and effective strategies ensure their social, physical and economic well-being are very well 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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

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	3
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	3
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

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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