

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/10/2009
Inspector	Donna Stevens
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged eight and ten in a house in Rubery. The whole of the ground floor and an upstairs bathroom is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. The family has two guinea pigs and chickens in the garden.

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. There are currently two children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), both of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is a member of the Worcestershire Childminding Association

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to providing good quality care and successfully creating an environment where children and families are made to feel welcome and valued. Systems to evaluate her practice are effective and she actively seeks the opinions of children, parents and carers to help identify areas for improvement. She then acts upon any suggestions or requests, providing a service that is responsive to the needs of each user. The childminder works closely with parents and carers to ensure the children's individual needs are well met. She is proactive in forming links with other settings children attend, ensuring continuity of care and learning, which enables children to make good progress.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the recording of risk assessments of the premises, equipment and outings.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Good quality, robust policies and procedures ensure that children are very well safeguarded. The childminder has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children's welfare and has attended training in this area. She has a clear policy that remains up-to-date and in line with local guidance and is shared with parents. Children are cared for in a home that is

safe and secure and the childminder carries out regular safety checks to ensure that all areas remain safe and risks to children are minimised. She now plans to record these assessments more formally in order to clearly track any potential risks to children.

The childminder is committed to her own self-development. As well as holding an NVQ Level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development she has recently completed a Home Based Childcare Diploma. She regularly attends local training events and meetings with other providers where good practice is shared. She is an active member of the county childminding group, striving to improve the standards of childminding in the local area. She has begun to use the Ofsted self-evaluation system to help her identify areas for improvement and actively seeks the opinions of parents and carers. They commented with enthusiasm on the children's learning journeys and expressed an interest in seeing them more frequently. The childminder now sends them home half-termly and has assured parents that they are available at any other time should they wish to see them.

The childminder has developed good relationships with parents and carers. Discussions at each end of a child's day ensure that relevant information can be shared and daily diaries are used to provide further details of children's welfare and learning. These are sent home each evening so that parents can share their children's day and continuity of care can be provided. Policies and procedures are given to parents when their children first start in the setting and are updated as needed; this ensures a clear understanding of the expectations of the childminder, parents, carers and children. The childminder works well in partnership with other settings the children attend and is proactive in sharing children's learning and development records with their key person, following consultation with parents.

The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and works closely with parents and carers to ensure the children's individual needs are met. Children and their families are valued and the childminder takes a great interest in their home life and time spent in other settings, talking to them about their experiences and giving children a sense of belonging and feeling valued.

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

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and in all areas of their development because the childminder has a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are able to independently choose their own toys and resources from a good selection that supports their individual stages of learning and development. The childminder plans for each week, focusing on all six areas of learning and linking activities to improve skills. Children join in enthusiastically with these planned activities, for example, making caterpillars from cardboard tubes. They are also able to give their own input to the activity as the childminder consults with them about possible resources they can use, colours of paint and paper they would like and the size and shape of various parts of the caterpillars body. Although activities are planned for each week, the childminder is skilled at allowing the children to steer their own learning. If the weather is nice

and children wish to visit the park and play outside, she will accommodate their requests and focus on a different skill, such as playing with balls or climbing and balancing. Time is also taken to experience spontaneous events like snowfall on a winter day so children develop their knowledge and understanding of the natural world as they play with the snow and explore what happens to it as it melts and freezes. At the end of each week the childminder reviews her plans and observations she has made of the children's play to inform future planning. This allows children to take the next steps and consolidate their learning.

Children are very happy in the setting and loving, caring relationships with the childminder are evident. They have three clear house rules that they are expected to adhere to at all times; when out of the home, stay in site of the childminder at all times, respect the toys, home and each other and never open the front door. The small number and simplicity of these allow children from a young age to begin to develop an understanding of acceptable behaviour and the childminder explains the consequences both to themselves and others if they do not follow this guidance. Children have opportunities to begin to learn to share and take turns as they play games and teamwork is actively encouraged as they enjoy group activities such as painting a large giraffe to put on the wall as a measuring chart. As a result children are well behaved, display a sense of responsibility and are kind and caring towards each other. They also begin to develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe and potential risks and dangers in the world around them.

The childminder spends a good deal of time supporting children's play. She knows each child extremely well and encourages them to develop their skills and learning through activities that they find interesting and enjoyable. She encourages their curiosity and independence as they explore and experiment with new equipment. Whilst drawing faces for their caterpillars, children became interested in the contents of a pencil case and in particular a ruler. The childminder explained how it could be used and assisted children in drawing straight lines, much to their delight and fascination. This led to requests to write their names and children as young as three were able to copy simple letters and recognize letter sounds. Allowing children to take the lead in activities provides children with valuable skills for the future of being independent and curious learners. The childminder considers children's needs when expanding resources, for example, as children become confident in completing puzzles she will purchase some with more pieces and when farm animals became a firm favourite, increased the selection to include zoo animals to spark children's imagination.

Children are secure and confident in the setting. Following reassurance from the childminder, they are open and friendly, talking about their experiences and interacting well with adults. They have well-established routines, eat and sleep well and the childminder is sensitive to their personal needs, attending to them quickly so they do not become upset or distressed. Children develop good hygiene habits and they know to wash their hands before eating, after playing in the garden and using the toilet. The childminder ensures that personal hygiene is particularly vigilant when the children help to collect eggs that the family chickens have laid.

Healthy eating is actively encouraged and children enjoy healthy snacks such as toast and fresh fruit. Parents provide their children's lunches in line with the

childminder's healthy eating ethos and drinks are readily available. Children have the opportunity to learn where food comes from as they take part in growing activities, such as sowing cress seeds. They are introduced to the basic principles of science as they watch how food changes when it is cooked and mixed together as they make cakes and biscuits. Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise as they walk to school each day and regularly visit local parks and outdoor play areas to develop their physical skills as they use climbing equipment and play ball games.

Children develop an understanding of being part of the local community as they regularly visit childminding groups where they can socialise, join in with group activities and use an extended range of toys and resources. During school holidays they learn about the wider community as they visit museums to look at the past and begin to have an understanding of other cultures through activities such as a visit to a Chinese restaurant. Their knowledge and understanding is further supported as they use a range of resources in the home, depicting positive images of race, culture, gender and disability.

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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