

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	123738
Inspection date	02/10/2009
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
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 1999. She lives with her three children aged two, 10 and 11 years in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and a secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The childminder does not have any pets.

This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, and of these, no more than three children may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. The children live in the local area. The childminder regularly works with two assistants. When working together, they may care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years.

The childminder collects children from the local school and pre-school and takes children on regular outings to local places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder has extensive knowledge and understanding of how to best promote children's learning and development, ensuring they thrive and make excellent progress. Partnerships with parents are highly valued and contribute significantly to ensuring that each child's individual needs are well met, along with any additional support needs. Children are settled and confident as they engage in a wide range of stimulating play opportunities in the safe and secure environment. Continuous improvement is promoted through the childminder's commitment to accessing ongoing training and her good self-evaluation processes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide more positive images that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and disabilities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well protected from harm as the childminder demonstrates a clear commitment to her role in safeguarding children. She has attended appropriate training relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) local guidance and procedures and has established a clear written safeguarding policy. This

ensures she can confidently follow up any concerns about a child's welfare. Effective vetting procedures ensure that the childminder and her assistants have completed the necessary checks to ensure their suitability to be in regular contact with children. Thorough risk assessments are carried out each day to ensure the premises is kept safe and secure, and there are very well-considered arrangements in place should an emergency situation occur in the home or during an outing. Children benefit from furniture, equipment and resources that are of very high quality and suitable to stimulate and challenge children of all ages and stages.

The childminder gets to know parents and carers extremely well, forming close, positive relationships with them. Information sharing, mainly through daily meaningful discussions, text messages and emails, is highly effective in ensuring that children's changing needs are well met. Parents and carers who are new to the setting receive a very informative welcome pack, covering detailed information about the service that is provided for their children, as well as, an outline of the key policies and procedures at the setting. The childminder is mindful to ensure this information is fully accessible to parents who speak English as an additional language, using photographs and discussion to add meaning. Children are safely escorted to and from the local pre-school, where the childminder has established good systems of communication with the other practitioners that care for the children. This promotes further continuity in the care that children experience.

The childminder is fully committed to meeting the needs of the children and their families, and values their views on the service she provides. For example, she actively seeks feedback from parents by issuing parental questionnaires and fostering meaningfully daily discussions about her practice. The childminder is reflective in her approach and open to trialing the new ideas that she gathers from a wide range of training courses. The benefits of completing the Ofsted self-evaluation form are well-recognised by the childminder, as she uses the process to identify the strengths of her setting and to establish realistic targets for continuous improvement.

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

Children are provided with excellent opportunities which help them to make strong progress in their learning and development. The childminder has developed extensive understanding of how children learn and uses this knowledge to skilfully extend and consolidate children's learning through her rich interactions with them. For example, children delight in playing with small vehicles as the childminder inspires their imaginations by drawing road tracks on the large sheets of paper. They enjoy wheeling their cars around the track, only stopping to point out that the track is oval-shaped. Children benefit from the childminder's intuitive understanding of their individual learning needs and interests. This is because she skilfully reflects on her observations of children's progress and gives high regard to these in the planning process. Each child's developmental record is beautifully presented with meaningful photographic examples of the children participating in a wide range of learning opportunities, and detailed observations that are skilfully linked to the aspects of learning in the EYFS. All reasonable adjustments are made

to maximise accessibility and equal participation for all children. For example, the childminder actively seeks information from parents of children who are learning English as an additional language, learning key words to use with children, encouraging the use of sign language, and celebrating children's use of their home language whilst at the setting.

The spacious outdoor area is very well resourced and imaginatively laid out, with children's physical development particularly well planned for. As a result, children enjoy carefully manoeuvring the ride-on car to avoid obstacles, bouncing energetically on the large trampoline, and learning to climb the steps before gliding down the slide. They show increasing levels of attention and concentration as they spend time scooping small stones into the mechanical digger, chatting away to themselves to bring meaning to their play. Children relish opportunities to visit different places of interest in the local community, for example, they observe different animals when visiting a farm and develop their physical skills on the larger play equipment at a soft play centre. The childminder fosters interesting discussions with children which help them to recognise their own unique qualities and celebrate the characteristics they share with other children. However, the use of positive images in challenging children's thinking around diversity and the wider world is less purposeful.

Children respond extremely well to the childminder's consistent and highly positive approach to supporting behaviour which helps them to play harmoniously together and to share resources with ease. Minor disputes between younger children are diffused very quickly as the childminder skilfully offers alternative resources which distract the children's attention. Children are developing a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, the childminder reminds them of the dangers of climbing on the furniture and ensures they are involved in practising regular fire evacuation drills in the home. Children are supported to learn about aspects of a healthy lifestyle as the childminder praises them for managing their hand washing routines independently and provides them with a very well-balanced range of nutritious meals and snacks. Children have practical opportunities to grow a wide range of fruit and vegetable plants in the garden, and begin to value these in their diets as they harvest these to enjoy in their meals.

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	1
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	1

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	1
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	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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