

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/12/2009
Inspector	Valerie Fane
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 1995. She lives with her husband and two adult children in St Albans near to the town centre. The whole of the ground floor and an upstairs bedroom are used for childminding. Accessibility to the premises is up a small step. 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 have a dog.

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, both of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. 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 settle very well with the childminder because she works closely with their parents to ensure that she takes into account of their individual needs and provides appropriate challenges for all children. They enjoy continuity of care because she has good links with other providers who share their care. Children make good progress because she has a secure understanding of how to plan and provide play opportunities that support their learning and development well. However, they have limited opportunities to develop their understanding of other cultures. She has worked hard since the last inspection to familiarise herself with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and all but one of the welfare requirements are met. She has recently completed a self-evaluation document but she has not used this effectively as a tool to identify ongoing areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information from parents of all children about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility for the child (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 15/12/2009

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

- improve children's opportunities to develop positive attitudes to diversity with

- respect to different cultures
- improve the systems for the organisation of the setting by developing the use of self-evaluation to support ongoing improvements.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a secure knowledge of the possible signs of abuse. She is familiar with the procedures she would follow if she was to have concerns about a child in her care. She has identified a need to attend training next year to ensure that her knowledge remains up to date. Children receive care in a home that is entirely safe and secure because the childminder has completed a detailed risk assessment of the premises and carries out comprehensive daily safety checks. She supervises children well at all times. Her good practice is underpinned by written policies that are effective in practice and are shared with parents.

The childminder has a clear vision to provide good quality childcare. Children use an interesting range of toys and equipment in their play including a few resources that reflect our wider society. The childminder has met the recommendations made at the last inspection. She has put considerable effort into developing her understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that she can plan and provide for children's learning appropriately. She observes activities that the children enjoy and identifies ways of extending these in the future. For example, she plans to grow more vegetables with the children next summer. She has recently completed a self-evaluation document but she has not used this effectively to identify areas for development across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children thrive because the childminder works closely with their parents or carers. Parents provide all required information and consents before children attend except information about who has parental responsibility and legal right of contact with their child. The childminder finds out plenty of information about all aspects of children's welfare and learning when they first attend so that she has a good understanding of their starting points. Children are well-placed to continue their learning at home because the childminder tells their parents what they have been doing with her. She also completes a weekly learning journal for them and she gives them regular access to children's photographic observation records. Children who attend other early years provision, such as a nursery or primary school, enjoy continuity of care. This is because the childminder has developed close links with their teachers and shares information with them as well as passing information between the parents and the other providers.

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

Children behave well for the childminder and are enthusiastic learners. This is because she sets clear boundaries for their behaviour and she provides play

opportunities that keep them interested and engaged. She observes and assesses their progress and uses the assessments to identify their next steps in all areas of learning. She provides good challenges for more able children that meet their learning needs well. She has not cared for babies for sometime but she understanding how to plan and provide for their needs and has identified toys that she will purchase to support their learning when she next minds this age group. The activities that she provides also support children's development of skills for the future.

Children who attend the childminder's house after school have lots of fun because she understands their needs at this time of day. They can choose to relax or to play with the wide range of toys appropriate for their age group. For example, they enjoy imaginative play in a group and work together to put on shows for the childminder or they play table top games.

Pre-school children enjoy role play with the childminder. They get out the play food and talk about the different items. They show awareness of mathematical language because they talk about the size of the food. They show understanding of which foods are healthy. They put the candles on the birthday cake and sing 'happy birthday' with the childminder. They talk about which food they like and which food their siblings prefer. The childminder supports simple problem solving by encouraging children to think about the items they need to make a pretend cup of tea. Children play with the toy cars. They help the childminder to construct a track and enjoy pushing the cars round. They take part in planned activities such as cooking and like to weigh out the ingredients, stir the mixture and spoon it into the paper cases.

Children's individual welfare needs are met well by the childminder because she talks to parents to find out as much as possible about their family and cultural background. All children gain some awareness of our diverse society because they mix with children of different nationalities at their school or nursery and the childminder supports and encourages any conversation about children's culture and festivals that they have celebrated at school. However, children's opportunities to take part in activities to support their understanding of diversity with the childminder are rather limited.

Children develop a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. They learn why they must wash their hands after handling the dog and the childminder limits the risk of cross infection by providing children with separate towels. Children talk about healthy foods with the childminder at mealtimes. For example, they decide which ingredients on their pizza are healthy. They take part in activities to extend their knowledge such as growing their own tomatoes and harvesting the crop. Children go for walks with the childminder and learn about their personal safety because the childminder teaches them to check whether or not cars are parked, to be careful crossing driveways and how to use the pelican crossing correctly. When they are on outings they know that they must stay within sight of the childminder.

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	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