

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	28/01/2010
Inspector	Susan Tuffnell
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 partner and her two children aged 12 and 14 years in a village close to Ware, Hertfordshire. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding purposes and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The premises are accessed by a low step to the front entrance.

The childminder provides care every weekday during term time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for three children on the Early Years Register and currently five children attend on part-time and flexible contracts. The childminder currently provides care for four children on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and there are currently two children attending on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. When working with an assistant, the childminder may care for no more than four children in the early years age group, and of these, not more than one may be under one year at any one time. All the children share the same facilities. The family have a cat.

The childminder holds the NVQ3 qualification in childcare and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder offers a very welcoming environment that supports children effectively in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The close partnership with parents contributes significantly to ensuring that the individual needs of all the children are met. Children are valued at the setting because the childminder has a clear understanding of diversity and equal opportunities and works very closely with parents regarding settling-in periods, education and care, to ensure the children are happy, settled and secure. There are clear procedures in place for evaluating her practice and identifying most priorities for future improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that a full risk assessment is carried out for every type of outing 09/03/2010

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

- ensure that regular evacuation drills are carried out and details recorded in a fire log book

- improve the use of information gathered about children's learning to enhance their good progress towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder supports the children well as they make good overall progress in their learning and development. She promotes their welfare and safeguards them effectively. The implementation of comprehensive policies, procedures and records supports the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensures that the needs of the children are met. Monthly risk assessments are conducted and prompt action is taken to manage or eliminate risks. However, risk assessments are not in place for outings and regular evacuation drills are not carried out and details recorded in a fire log book, to ensure children are confident in emergencies. The childminder has very positive relationships with parents and carers, which are well-established and make a strong contribution to children's achievements and well-being. Parents greatly appreciate the close links encouraged by the childminder and are well-informed about their children's care and education. Evaluation of the provision takes into account the views of parents, carers and children and is effective in identifying most strengths and weaknesses. Action is taken to tackle identified weaknesses, including those identified at previous inspections and plans for the future are generally well targeted to bring about further improvements to the provision. Information is collected from regular observations to evaluate the impact of the educational programme on each individual child, although children's identified learning needs are not carried forward, implemented into future planning or evaluated to give a clearer picture of their progress towards the early learning goals.

The welcoming and homely environment is organised effectively for learning and the childminder takes appropriate steps to ensure resources and the environment are sustainable. The childminder has a good knowledge of each child's backgrounds and needs, and makes the most of diversity to help children understand the society they live in. For example, children have excellent opportunities to meet others as they join in with regular trips to 'play and stay' sessions at the Surestart Centre. The childminder obtains the school newsletters and is aware of the topic areas and able to extend learning at the setting. She shares good quality information and records with parents to ensure that children are fully supported.

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

Children are provided with a good range of opportunities to help them make progress across the areas of learning and development. Imaginative planning links successfully to children's interests and stage of development to provide an individual learning journey and ensures that each child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience across the areas of learning. Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities and take responsibility for choosing what

they do and following their own interests. For example, children decide to put on concerts for their parents. They sing and dance accompanied by the childminder on the piano and take this opportunity to practise playing the flute and the guitar. The planning of activities and resources to raise children's awareness of different customs and cultures is managed well. For example, the childminder works closely with the school to extend and enhance festivals and celebrations such as the Chinese New Year. Parents are involved as they share their own culture with traditional dress and food.

Children enjoy stimulating and interesting activities that encourage them to explore the natural environment with lots of nature walks to collect leaves and twigs for collage and to feed the ducks and watch the horses in the fields. Children enjoy all the seasons. The childminder's garden backs onto the farmers fields, so children learn about growth, as they watch ploughing, planting and harvesting throughout the year. Children take full advantage of the snowy weather to play outside, build snowmen and discover weather changes through freezing and thawing. This is extended with art and craft activities inside, as children draw, paint and decorate their large snowman creations. Children engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outside as they visit local parks and join in physical activities. They use large and small equipment to practise a wide variety of movements such as climbing, balancing, kicking and throwing.

Children show a growing awareness about healthy lifestyles as they adopt good personal hygiene routines and are supported in making healthy choices at snack time. Their understanding of healthy food is extended during the school holidays with trips to restaurants to try different foods and to food markets and farms, such as a tomato producer. Children show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know that the country lanes around the childminder's house are narrow and there is no pavement to walk on, so they have developed their own strategies for personal safety. For example, children stop walking and stand still at the side of the lane if they hear a car coming, and wait till it has passed safely, before continuing their journey. Children enjoy being involved in everyday tasks as they tidy toys and help with cleaning tasks. For example, children use the hand wipes to clean the outside of the rubbish bin after snack time. Some children learn about recycling at pre-school and school and the childminder extends this in the setting by talking to the children about sorting different types of materials into a recycling bin.

Children count spontaneously as they play and join in with counting songs and rhymes. Learning programmes are available to help children with counting and number recognition and children learn about weight and volume as they prepare ingredients for cooking. Children display a strong sense of belonging and security. They show high levels of self-esteem and confidence and are very much at home within the setting. Children chat to the childminder and each other, as they sit around the table making their snowman pictures. They display good skills with scissors as they cut around the shapes of the snowmen's hats and scarves. Children recognise letters, shapes and numbers in their creations. For example, children compare the shape of the snowman's scarf with a letter 'u' and count the buttons for the snowman's coat. Children who attend nursery in the morning share their news with the childminder when they arrive. They talk about the sounds they

are learning and extend this by giving examples of corresponding words. Children play and work alongside their peers successfully and play an active role in their learning as they self-select resources and organise imaginative games. Their behaviour is very good and they show a good awareness of responsibility within the setting.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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

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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