

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY395569
Inspection date	17/03/2010
Inspector	Shaheen Matloob
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 August 2009. She lives with her husband and child close to the centre of Littleborough, near Rochdale, Lancashire. Local amenities, such as shops, parks, schools and public transport links are all close by. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed garden area for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. Currently she is caring for two children in the early years age range.

The childminder attends sessions at the local Sure Start centre and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Childcare and Education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a warm and welcoming family home for children and offers a range of activities and flexible routines to appropriately meet the needs of children. She promotes the majority of areas of children's welfare with success. Partnerships with parents are generally positive, although parents are less involved in contributing to and supporting their children's learning and development. Self-evaluation is undertaken by the childminder, and is based on appropriate levels of monitoring, but does not currently involve parents. Some strengths and areas for improvement are identified adequately and these, alongside parental questionnaires, are likely to bring about improvements to outcomes and the provision for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the arrangements for parents to contribute to and review their children's learning and development and also support this in meaningful ways
- continue to improve resources and activities to promote children's understanding of diversity
- ensure that next steps in children's development are linked to planning a range of motivating and challenging activities in order to help children make progress
- develop self-evaluation and reflection processes to identify areas for development that will impact on the outcomes and overall provision for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a clear commitment to promoting children's safety. She has a good understanding of safeguarding issues and has completed relevant training. Clear policies and systems ensure that children are protected and any concerns are recorded effectively, including information that is shared with relevant child agencies in the event of a concern raised about children's welfare and safety. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure that adults having unsupervised access to children are safe to do so.

The childminder has organised her home effectively, efficiently and in a child-centred manner. Available resources provide children with independence and self-help skills. A positive commitment to continual professional development ensures that she learns new skills and keeps up-to-date with changes to improve her practice for children. Policies and procedures, including complaints procedures are effective and are implemented well to promote equality and eliminate discrimination.

The childminder is working generally well to improve outcomes for children and narrowing any identified achievement gaps. She actively promotes equality of opportunity and updates her knowledge of equality through relevant training. Children's understanding of differences is promoted through food tasting from other cultures, celebrating festivals and access to a range of resources. However, the childminder recognises herself that these resources are limited. She is able to confidently challenge any stereotypical views and ensures that all resources are available to all children. The childminder uses the Ofsted self-evaluation form, although this is mainly completed without the involvement of parents. Regular discussions ensure that parents' views are obtained and the childminder has introduced parental questionnaires. However, arrangements for self-evaluation and reflection are not fully robust, and do not effectively identify areas of improvement in relation to the impact on outcomes for children, and how the overall provision will be improved.

The childminder recognises that parents are central to children's lives and has established highly positive partnerships with parents to ensure that the needs of children are met. Parents are provided with good quality information about the early years provision through a welcome pack on introduction and discussions about all aspects of the care provided. There is a regular two-way exchange of information to keep parents well informed of their children's achievement and progress, and a daily diary promotes continuity of well-being and care. However, current systems to involve parents in contributing to their children's development records, and supporting their learning, are not fully established. A successful settling-in procedure ensures that relevant information is gained to meet children's needs and alleviate parental concerns.

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

Children are confident and self-assured to work independently and with the childminder's own child. The childminder understands the needs of children and provides a sufficient range of activities and experiences. Babies receive lots of genuine warmth and affection and have a close attachment to the childminder, giving them a sense of security and well-being. Flexible routines enable children's independence, and care routines are followed in accordance with parents to promote children's welfare, care and development. The childminder has a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which she uses to regularly observe children and makes clear records of assessment. As a result, children make steady progress in most areas of learning and development. Observations are clearly linked to the areas of learning and next steps are identified in relation to the learning intentions. However, continuous links are not made with regards to planning, which means that motivating and relevant experiences are not consistently planned for children, helping them to move on. Children enjoy exploring with media as they engage in mark-making activities and enjoy looking at books with the childminder, listening attentively as they talk about the story and pictures.

The childminder takes positive steps to promote safety and keep children safe. She provides safe and well-maintained furniture and equipment that meets the varying needs of the children, and allows them to make choices and access opportunities within a safe environment. She uses her knowledge of children's developmental abilities and begins to make them aware of potential dangers. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that effective safety measures are in place. Children happily leave the childminder's side and explore the environment, moving freely from one room to another. They also begin to take risks as they confidently climb onto low level furniture and sit down. Fire safety is effective and evacuations are practised regularly with children and a log is kept of these.

Good standards of hygiene are maintained throughout the home and children begin to learn the importance of good personal hygiene through established daily routines. Nappy changing and disposal is hygienic, and disposable wipes and facecloths are used throughout the day to sustain high levels of hygiene. A clear sickness policy is shared with parents and informed decisions are made to ensure that infection is not spread and that the childminder acts in the best interests of the children. Children begin to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink. The childminder devises weekly menus in accordance with dietary requirements and preferences. All meals and snacks are healthy, nutritionally balanced and freshly prepared. Children are encouraged to try new foods and experiment with foods from other cultures.

Children respond to the expectations of the childminder because strategies, used to manage children's behaviour, are consistent and take into account their levels of understanding and maturity. As a result, children behave well, join in and share with each other. Where possible, parent's requests regarding behaviour management are met according to their values and practices. The childminder uses

herself as a positive role model to promote good behaviour and manners, which are copied by the children.

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?	3
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?	3
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	3
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	3
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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	3
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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