

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/04/2010
Inspector	Frank William Kelly
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 2009. She lives with her husband and two children, aged nine and seven, in the Hunts Cross area of Liverpool. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, of these three may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for one child in this age group. She is also caring for children aged over five years to eight years. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder holds a recognised childcare qualification and is a member of National Childminding Association. She takes the children out to places of interest on a regular basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder maintains a professional approach to all aspects of her provision. Self-evaluation, while not currently formalised, is constantly being implemented as the childminder strives to drive further improvement. Her home is very clean, well presented and welcoming. Children are at ease within this enabling environment, as they have good access to resources and hold secure and warm relationships with the childminder. Their learning and development is complemented by the friendly interactions, and the careful planning and assessment that the childminder undertakes, frequently using the children's interests to engage them in their play. The emphasis on safety is superb and the meticulous documentation underpins children's well-being across all aspects of the care provided. Partnerships successfully promote an inclusive setting in which children's individual needs are fully met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- formalise self-evaluation to continue to use as a tool for monitoring the provision changes
- further develop partnerships with other settings that provide shared care to ensure that what is provided complements the learning and development of the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is very well organised. She demonstrates a comprehensive awareness of the procedures to follow should she have concerns about a child being at risk. Her safeguarding children policy holds all relevant information, is simply worded and easy for the reader to understand. The childminder's attention to detail and constant monitoring of her provision, with regard to the welfare requirements and promoting children's safety, are excellent. She conducts rigorous checks of her home daily and organises the home extremely well. For example, signs to locate the fire blanket and first aid box are displayed on the cupboard doors in the kitchen. An evacuation plan is displayed by the front door, the smoke detectors are checked weekly and records retained. Drills are conducted frequently, with detailed records of the route, who was involved and any issues that arose.

Risk assessments for the home and outings are detailed and take into consideration aspects, such as the safest routes, and what equipment needs to be taken for each group of children and specific outing. As part of the childminder's self-assessment she invited an early years development worker to observe how she escorts children to and from school. Recommendations from this accompanied visit have been promptly implemented to further improve the children's safety, and by talking with them about the importance of remaining vigilant as they pass driveways, the children have an increased awareness of keeping themselves safe.

The childminder's attitude to continually improving outcomes for children is very good. She is committed to providing a quality service and is able to reflect and identify appropriate action to improve. For example, she recognises that while not caring for babies at present, she would benefit from updating her knowledge about the procedures for minimising Sleeping Infant Death Syndrome, before she cares for younger children in the future. She is aware that her systems for self-evaluation may benefit from being formalised, so as to act as a record of progression and assist with future review.

The childminder's current organisation is benefiting all the children she cares for. At present she is primarily caring for children who are not in the early years age range. However, she carefully organises her time so that the younger children enjoy lots of individual attention and so that when older children are present, the younger children are allowed to fully join in their games and activities, such as making dens in the garden. The home and daily routines are thoughtfully organised, with children having easy access to a wide range of resources which are attractively presented. They are thoughtfully labelled with both pictures and print to help all the children independently locate, remove and replace.

Books, posters and multi-lingual welcome messages provide children with images and information about their wider world. Activities, such as playing airports, and stories about religions and cultural celebrations provide the children with a range of opportunities to talk about, and gain a wider understanding of, their own and other peoples cultures and beliefs.

Partnerships with parents are highly positive and underpinned by good quality documentation and regular updates. The sharing of information is fostered by daily verbal exchanges and information that allows parents to plan well in advance. For example, the childminder has provided the parents with her proposed holiday dates for the next two years. Copies of policies and procedures are included in the initial information pack and settling-in visits are used to gain information that allows the children's individual needs and routines to be attended to.

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of wider partnership working. She has become part of the early years network, and has policies and procedures in place to support the care of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, at present, although she exchanges information verbally with other settings who provide shared care, she has not considered how this could be further developed to ensure that what is provided, complements and ensures progression.

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

The childminder successfully promotes all of the five outcomes for children. One of her key strengths is the secure relationships she has forged with the children. Consequently they feel safe, are confident in their surroundings and are extremely chatty. They instigate constant discussion about what they notice and the positive responses from the childminder allow them to explore their own ideas and those of others. For example, a discussion about marks on the skylight, covers what or who may have made it, who could clean it and if men are stronger than women. By carefully responding to the child's views, the childminder acknowledges that men may be big and strong but also that women can be big and strong, even if they are not as strong as some men.

The childminder is enthusiastic and good natured with the children. She sits on the floor and plays with the children, led by their interests. The play involves dinosaurs and a shark, and in the process they talk about how sharks would move on the ground and if they can breathe out of water. The shark moves to the sand tray outdoors and gleeful games of hide the shark and octopus take place, during which the childminder helps the children to learn about being fair by not cheating, when one child hides one of the toys. The home is extremely clean, and pictures in the toilet provide visual prompts to remind children about the importance of washing hands. The menus provide children with a range of healthy options, including cheese and crackers, fruit and vegetable batons. Sensitive steps are being implemented to help extend the range of foods that some children will try. Children's safety is superbly promoted as they are actively encouraged to learn about road safety when out and when using equipment, such as the large climbing frame in the garden.

Children's progress and development is fostered very well. Detailed learning diaries are maintained and shared with parents on a regular basis. Core information when children start is used to plan activities and play experiences that are linked to the

children's interests. The organisation of the home allows for self-chosen activities, and the childminder has flexible plans that are altered to allow for children's current interests or experiences to be built on. For example, while playing airports, one child suggested that they would need a passport. The childminder provided the materials for the children to make passports, incorporating aspects of various areas of learning. They used the digital camera to take pictures and print them, used tools to cut with and pencils to mark make. They looked at a map of the world and the children of different nationalities were able to talk about where they were born. This well-planned approach engages the children and provides rich and practical learning that children can relate to. On other occasions, when out walking, the childminder talks with the children about the features that they see. They count cars, and talk about colours, seasonal changes and where a path might lead to. These types of experiences help to foster the children's active learning, developing their curiosity and confidence to explore and try new experiences, all of which are recognised as the foundations for future life skills and learning.

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	1
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	1
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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