

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/03/2010
Inspector	Cathleen Howarth
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 registered in 1999. She lives with her husband and two children aged 17 and 13 years in Failsworth, Greater Manchester. Most of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding, which includes the downstairs bathroom. There is provision for outside play on the enclosed drive at the side of the house and at the local park. Parents use the side entrance and there is one step into the house through the patio doors.

The family has a dog and cat, which live in the house.

Transport is provided. The childminder sometimes walks to school to take and collect children. She attends the local toddler group, playgroup and childminding support group, of which she is a founding member. The childminder usually provides care throughout the year on weekdays from 8am to 5.30pm.

The childminder is registered to provide care for a maximum six children under eight years; of these, not more than three may be in the early years age group, and of these, not more than one may be under one year at any one time. Currently, there are three children on roll on the Early Years Register and two children on roll on the Childcare Register.

The childminder is appropriately qualified.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A distinct feature is the childminder's informal but considered approach in supporting children to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Inclusive practice is firmly embedded in all aspects of the provision and, as a result, children's individual needs are well met. Systems for self-evaluation demonstrate the childminder has a good capacity to make independent and continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use the information obtained in children's development files to consistently inform individual activity plans
- build on existing partnerships with the nursery school, in relation to children's learning and development, to promote a seamless approach to delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's in-depth awareness of safeguarding issues is good. She fully understands her role in child protection, including the procedures to follow should a concern arise.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is good. Overall, outcomes for children in relation to their welfare and achievement are good. The childminder attends training events to keep up to date with childcare practice. The effective deployment of resources, in addition to the physical layout of the setting, meets the needs of children well and clearly enhances their experience at the setting.

The childminder places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all her work. She is effective at narrowing the achievement gap and she has a secure knowledge of each child's background and needs. Children are learning about human differences in the wider community through well thought through activities that positively promote gender, disability, ethnicity and culture. Some examples include arts, crafts and role play.

Systems for self-evaluation include working closely with other childminders at Smarties, which is a well-established childminding support group in Failsworth. In addition, issues raised at the last inspection have been fully addressed and, as a result, children's safety at the setting has been enhanced.

There are meaningful levels of engagement at the setting. Relationships and working in partnership with parents are good. Parents are routinely involved in decision-making on key matters affecting their children through well-established procedures, which effectively promotes children's continuing care.

Overall, the effectiveness of working in partnership with others is good. The childminder demonstrates a high level of awareness to provide well for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She regularly shares information with staff at the nursery school with regard to children's welfare, and routinely exchanges this information with parents when they collect their children at the setting. However, in relation to children's learning and development, there is limited information shared with the children's key person at the nursery school, to promote a seamless approach to delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and she promotes children's learning and development well. Children's individual progress is good in relation to their starting points and capabilities. This is demonstrated through effective systems and good levels of

consistency. For example, the childminder routinely records observations of children at play to determine their natural interests, capabilities and preferred learning styles. She tracks children's progress, using the information in the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and maintains pictorial evidence of what children have achieved in their development files. The childminder routinely evaluates stimulating and challenging activities with children, taking into account their age and stage of development. However, the information she has obtained is not always used consistently well to inform children's individual activity plans. As a result, it is difficult for parents to see how the childminder supports children in a methodical way, to take the next step towards the early learning goals. However, teaching methods are effective and the childminder is able to maintain children's attention for long periods. All children are encouraged to have a go and, as a result, they are confident learners, who have clearly developed a positive attitude towards learning.

All children show a strong sense of security and feel safe within the setting. They understand what standards of behaviour are expected and apply these in order to keep themselves and others safe. This includes road safety, which the childminder continuously reinforces. Children practise the emergency evacuation plan, in order to learn how to act responsibly in times of uncertainty. Their understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines is also good and children know why they should wash their hands before eating. Healthy eating is positively promoted and children make healthy choices, such as choosing fresh fruit for snacks. There are good opportunities for children to engage in a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. All children are highly valued and treated with equal concern. They work well on their own and with others, for example, at the childminding support group, where resources obtained from the toy library are shared and rotated. Children engage in meaningful activities that help them value diversity. For example, children learn about different cultures, languages and religions through the use of books, jigsaws, musical instruments and a host of other resources and activities to effectively reinforce their learning.

Children's development in communication, numeracy and literacy and their use of information and communication technology are good. They are inquisitive learners who show a natural desire to explore and examine their environment and resources. Children have great fun when they draw and paint pictures and they look forward to showing their parents what they have achieved. They confidently and spontaneously self-select books and they like the childminder to read to them. She uses every opportunity to reinforce their learning by making appropriate links to what they already know. For example, children are asked to count different people and objects in the picture book and to identify different colours and shapes.

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	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

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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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