

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	28/07/2010
Inspector	Mary Daniel
Type of setting	Childminder

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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 has been registered since March 2005. She lives with her husband and two sons, aged 10 and seven years, in a semi-detached house situated in Frome, Somerset. Children have use of a lounge, dining room, kitchen, conservatory/playroom and toilet facilities on the ground floor and three bedrooms and bathroom facilities on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden at the back of the house for playing outdoors.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years at any one time, of whom three may be in the early years age group. Additional children can be cared for when working with an assistant. There are currently nine children on roll, of whom all are in the early years age group. The family have one cat.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and content with the friendly childminder who gets to know their individual needs very well through the excellent relationships she forms with their parents. A good range of interesting play activities are provided, which are based on children's individual developmental stages and interests and supports them very well in achieving and enjoying in their learning. Evaluation systems are implemented and are becoming established to support the childminder's aims to maintain ongoing improvement in all areas of her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop systems of self-evaluation to ensure all aspects of the provision are consistently monitored and reviewed to clearly identify and address all priorities for improvement
- continue to develop the planning and assessment systems and review the use of everyday routine activities, such as outside play, to provide further opportunities to help children in reaching their full potential in all areas of their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is suitably managed as the childminder has a sound knowledge of safeguarding issues and how to manage any concerns arising. Required policies and procedures are in place and are regularly updated, which helps in reviewing practices followed. Children benefit from the extremely strong relationships the

childminder forms with their parents and clear consideration is given to ensuring their involvement is actively encouraged. For instance, parents receive a range of comprehensive information about the provision offered as their child starts. This includes the childminder's policies and procedures and clearly detailed information on children's development through each area of learning. This enables parents to find out how their child's learning will be supported through their play. Written parental permissions are obtained, such as for taking children on outings or taking photos of their children and where these can be used. This effectively promotes clear continuity in children's care and helps in reassuring parents through ongoing open communication. Parents have excellent ongoing opportunities to share information on their child's achievements and interests at home through the 'All about me' sheets given to them. As a result, the childminder is able to build up a clear picture of each child's developmental needs and abilities. Parents say their child thrives with the childminder and clearly feels loved and secure in her care. They are impressed with the degree of development their children have made and the degree of interest and individual attention each child is given. Consequently, highly positive and productive relationships are formed that contribute to consistency in each child's care and learning.

Clear consideration has been given to evaluating the provision offered and this has helped in addressing the recommendations set at the last inspection. For example, planning and assessment systems have been reviewed to provide activities based more on children's individual needs. The childminder continues to review her practice and is looking at ways to ensure her evaluations clearly evidence areas for improvement in all aspects of her provision. Children play with a wide range of colourful, well-maintained toys and resources that support their interests and developmental needs. For instance, they develop their coordination skills as they play in the sand tray, filling and emptying the various containers or as they attempt to dribble and kick the footballs on the grass. Toys and games are organised well to encourage children's independent choices and support their spontaneous ideas in play.

The childminder forms good partnerships with some other settings children attend and has made active attempts to liaise with others to ensure her minded children receive a consistent approach to their learning. Each child is clearly welcomed within the childminder's home and a positive attitude is given to diversity. For example, the childminder helps them learn about other ways of living through use of some appropriate resources and play activities. They know their younger friends may need some help in their play and fetch toys for them. Each child's birthday is celebrated as they help to make a favourite cake and have a party lunch. As a result, children feel valued within the home and happily play with their friends, while learning to respect the needs of others.

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

Children enjoy the range of meaningful activities provided. For example, they follow the lifecycle of a frog and watch their tadpoles as they grow. They colour and cut out pictures of this process and use their drawings with annotations to

help to sequence the lifecycle across each month. For instance, in June they see 'the small froglets leave the pond and hide in the grasses and reeds'. This helps children to learn about their natural world through practical and creative activities and also promotes their early language and literacy skills. Children like to play outside and push their scooters and bikes with excitement down the grassed hill, showing good control in their manoeuvres. They are keen to run and use up their energy and often go for trips to a nearby play park or adventure castle, where they can climb and stretch and develop their large muscle skills while having fun. Children settle easily and become engrossed in their play. For example, they spend time making models of boats with the colourful bricks and use the small world people to 'walk the planks' they have built onto the deck. This encourages their imagination and hand eye coordination and also promotes them working together as they talk about their models and help each other find the pieces they need.

Children like to snuggle on the sofa to listen to a favourite story. They become familiar with different types of print as the childminder also uses information books, for instance, in providing an atlas to extend children's play as they draw maps in their game. Planning and assessment systems support the childminder in using her observations of children's play to plan further activities, which build on their existing, individual abilities. This promotes their development well overall, although clear focus is not always given to their learning opportunities within some everyday routine activities. Children have great fun as they dress up as 'Spiderman' or 'Mr Incredible' and their interest in 'superheroes' is carefully extended to promote further skills. For instance, they work together to cover a large cardboard box with tin foil and stick some number shapes on the roof to help to build 'Buzz Light Year's spaceship'. This encourages their creativity and imagination and awareness of numbers as they count '3, 2, 1' to 'blast off'.

Children practise fire drills regularly and know it is important they listen to adults at these times and they learn to handle and use toys and equipment safely so they do not hurt themselves. As a result, they start to develop an awareness of keeping themselves safe. Children are provided with a great choice of healthy foods for their meals, which effectively helps to raise their awareness of foods that are good for them. For instance, they choose the fillings for their pitta breads and decide on cheese or ham and salad. They help to prepare their lunch and eagerly go to pick some strawberries from the garden to have for their pudding with some juicy grapes. Children can easily access their drinks bottles and this helps them to keep well hydrated. They have lots of opportunities to play in the fresh air and also go to visit nearby animal farms, where they see 'Zig Zag' the pony. They sometimes visit a local farmers market and like to look at the fruit, vegetables and fish stalls and they also go to see the chickens in their run. This helps children to learn about where foods come from and supports them in developing a healthy lifestyle. They listen to a story about how Japanese people recycle their rubbish and they help to recycle left over foods from their lunch, which encourages their early understanding of sustainability. Children behave well overall and play happily with their friends. The childminder and assistant act as good role models and talk calmly to the children, giving them clear explanations as to why certain actions may be dangerous. Children respond easily to their frequent praise, gentle humour and positive approach to helping them achieve through their play and, consequently, are secure and settled in the home.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1

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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