

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	304806
Inspection date	26/04/2010
Inspector	Dianne Andrews
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1999. She lives with her partner and three teenage children in a residential area within walking distance of Crewe town centre. All of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She can care for up to six children under eight years when working with an assistant. There are currently eight children on roll, six of whom are under eight years. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children and attends local toddler groups. She works with two assistants throughout the week.

There are a dog, cats, a rabbit, chickens and bearded dragon reptiles on the premises and four ponies kept locally, which are regularly visited.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder's good partnership working with parents and her positive interaction with children support her in gaining a thorough understanding of each child's needs and interests. She utilises this knowledge to help ensure that children's needs are consistently met and they are offered appropriate support and activities that promote their development. The childminder shows a genuine enjoyment of her work with children and is committed to continuously improving her practice. This enables her to provide a childminding service which remains responsive to children's needs. Most documentation is maintained in line with requirements and recently introduced procedures for self-evaluation provides the childminder with a clear picture of her practice, enabling her to implement changes and improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide arrival and departure procedures for staff assisting in the childminding service
- develop planning and evaluation systems to ensure that all areas of learning are covered equally.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a clear understanding of issues relating to safeguarding children, this means that she is able to promote children's welfare at all times. A practical written procedure further supports this and ensures that she is able to identify children at risk and take appropriate action. Space and the excellent range

of resources are well-organised. The learning environment is vibrant and welcoming and the childminder ensures that accessible resources effectively meet the needs and individual requirements of the children attending. She makes use of risk assessments, both in the home environment and for outings, reviewing them periodically to ensure they remain pertinent. Regular emergency evacuation practises, involving all the children, are carried out to promote their safety.

The childminder's policies and procedures are clear and appropriate and are made available to parents so that they know how the care service operates. Insurance and registration certificates are clearly displayed and the daily register, accident, incident and medication records and procedures are completed as appropriate to promote children's welfare. The childminder confirms the identification of visitors, whose times of arrival and departure are recorded. Suitability checks are completed on household members and on those working on the premises to provide reassurance to parents that they are suitable to have contact with children. However, arrival and departure procedures for staff assisting in the childminding service are not in place to demonstrate how the required ratios are maintained.

The childminder forges warm and supportive relationships with parents from the outset. She obtains useful details about the children's needs, interests and routines and uses this information to help her plan activities, which help children to take their next steps. However, she does not incorporate all of this information directly into the child's learning journey. She completes regular observations of children's progress and matches these to the six areas of learning. However, she has not yet reviewed or summarised these observations to ensure progress is consistent in each of the six areas of learning. Nevertheless, parents are regularly shown their child's learning journey records and are pleased with the variety of stimulating activities that children take part in and the progress their children are making. The childminder works together with other settings that children attend to provide consistent and complementary care and learning. She clearly enjoys her work and is committed to organising, reviewing and improving the service. She is well-qualified and experienced; she accesses on-going training opportunities and obtains advice from other practitioners and the Local Authority development officers to further help develop her knowledge and to ensure she is up-to-date with current legislation and guidance.

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

Children enjoy good opportunities to be active and learn skills for the future through play, outdoor and social experiences. The childminder supports children with skill, talking, challenging and including them in daily routines and interesting planned activities. She has created a safe and welcoming environment and children's behaviours demonstrate that they feel secure and settled. Ongoing explanations and gentle encouragement from the childminder and her assistant help children to begin to appreciate other people's views and feelings and to share the toys and resources. They play happily with the role play equipment, re-enacting familiar roles while confidently moving around the playroom and independently selecting toys and making choices. Children sustain their interest in

activities because the toys and resources provided are of good quality, displayed attractively, stimulating and fun to play with.

Children develop a sense of belonging as they recognise themselves and their playmates on displayed photographs showing exciting activities they have taken part in to help them gain an understanding of pond life and a frog's life cycle. Good use is made of the natural environment as children are supported to plant and grow flowers and vegetables in the garden and to collect and count the fresh eggs that the hens lay each morning. They develop an understanding of important personal hygiene routines, washing their hands after play and drying them on individual towels to promote their good health. They benefit from home-cooked meals which, whenever possible, include ingredients grown by the children. They walk to school and use the local park to ensure they benefit from fresh air and to encourage an active lifestyle.

Planned activities are well considered; young children listen to a part of the 'Gingerbread Man' story and are encouraged to be involved using props from the story sack. They develop language skills as they repeat phrases and words. When their interest wanes they are diverted to the associated activity of making a sensory salt dough, out of which they cut gingerbread man figures. They enthusiastically use tools to mix and roll as they relish the nutmeg aroma of the dough. Children's communication is frequently aided through the use of sign language, developed following a parent's use of baby-signing and through the introduction of Makaton signing by a favourite television character. They are exposed to positive images and information as they look at cultural festivals, which enable them to begin to recognise and value diversity.

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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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