

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	502044
Inspection date	21/06/2010
Inspector	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
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 2001. She lives with her husband and their five children aged between five years and 17 years in Morecambe. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder lives close to local schools, children's centres, toddler groups, shops, parks and the beach. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Childcare, Learning and Education. She is also an accredited childminder and member of the Bay Childminding Network. She is also part of the buddy system, and currently supports four other childminders.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder effectively promotes children's welfare, learning and development to a high standard because she gets to know and value their individual needs and interests well. Resources are very well deployed, which contributes to children's good progress, given their age, ability and starting point. The childminder's partnerships with parents and other professionals in the community are excellent, ensuring a shared approach to the children's ongoing learning and development. Children are safe and secure due to the thorough risk assessments undertaken, however, the procedures for fire safety and safety regarding the trampoline are currently not sufficiently robust. The childminder is committed to continuous improvement and professional development. She has undertaken some evaluation of her practice by completing the accreditation scheme, however, the self-evaluation process is not yet completed to clearly identify her strengths and areas for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the process of self-evaluation to further identify and clarify the strengths and areas for further continuous development
- improve the level of safety by increasing the frequency of the emergency evacuation drills and by making sure that the trampoline is made safe.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has undertaken safeguarding children training and has a clear understanding of her responsibilities in keeping children safe. She is committed to keeping children safe and secure while in her care as she conducts regular risk assessments of the premises and the garden. However, the safety netting around the trampoline is in disrepair and is currently unsafe for use. Although there is a procedure to follow if emergency evacuation of the building becomes necessary, emergency evacuation drills are not practised frequently enough to ensure that all children are familiar with them. Written risk assessments and parental permissions are in place for when children undertake outings and they are taught skills to keep themselves safe, such as road safety. The childminder has worked hard to make sure that all of the required documentation is in place to ensure the smooth running of this childcare service.

Parents enjoy very positive relationships with the childminder, who makes sure that a good two-way flow of information exists between them. She keeps parents very well informed about their children's welfare and progress by a daily exchange of information both verbally and through the use of daily diaries that are illustrated with photos so that the parents can see what the children have been doing. The childminder includes the parents in their children's learning by asking what the children like to do at home and by encouraging the children to take books and toys home with them to use with the parents. Written references from the parents clearly highlight how happy they are with the care provided for their children. The childminder has a lot of experience of working in partnership with other professionals to provide continuity of care for children. For example, when children attend more than one setting, she liaises closely with other childminders to ensure a consistent approach. Also, when children require additional support, the childminder works alongside parents and professionals, such as physiotherapists, to provide the additional care required.

The childminder provides an inclusive service for all children and families to ensure that their individual needs are respected and well catered for. Positive images of diversity and differences in society are represented in children's play equipment, posters and activities that are undertaken, in order to widen children's awareness of our multicultural society. The childminder has undertaken evaluation of her service by completing the accreditation process. Resources, such as training and advice, are used very well to help the childminder advance her professional development and provide good quality childcare. She has not completed a self-evaluation process which completely identifies the childminder's strengths and areas for further development.

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

Children are very happy and settled in this setting. The learning environment is vibrant and child centred, providing children with a stimulating base from which

they play and excel in their learning. Continual access to the garden means that children are free to explore, investigate and enjoy selected toys and equipment, which has been set out to provide an extension to the indoor learning. The childminder provides an extremely stimulating and interesting learning environment, full of exciting activities and equipment, which are well deployed. Children are making very good progress in their development and learning as the childminder has a secure knowledge of all of the areas of learning and uses this to plan various activities suitable for all of the children who attend. She has developed a very good understanding of children's individual interests and abilities by communicating closely with parents and by undertaking her own observations of the children. The childminder keeps good records of each child's progress, including written observations, photographs and samples of children's work, linking learning to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The observations and assessments are well recorded in the learning journeys and clearly identify the children's next steps in their learning.

Children feel safe as they enjoy warm and trusting relationships with the childminder. They enjoy cuddles when they are tired and they are confident to ask for help if needed, which demonstrates that they are relaxed in her company and enjoy their time with her. The childminder teaches them, in an age appropriate way, about risks in the home and outside, therefore enabling them to develop a sense of safety. For example, they learn about road safety and they know that the red man means 'stop' and the green man means 'go'. They also learn about stranger danger and about protecting themselves in the sunshine, by wearing sun hats and sun cream. The children are well-behaved and make a positive contribution as the childminder encourages them to be kind to each other. When they have disagreements, the childminder offers gentle guidance and encourages them to say sorry and give each other hugs.

Children have good opportunities to adopt healthy lifestyles as they enjoy regular outdoor play and fresh air. The children enjoy playing in the very well equipped garden, where they choose from an extensive range of resources and outdoor learning opportunities. They also enjoy regular outings to the park to play on the various apparatus that promote their physical development and coordination. The children also enjoy regular trips to the nearby beach where they use their buckets and spades to make sand castles, and collect pebbles and shells to play with in their sand tray in the garden. They enjoy nutritious snacks, meals and drinks throughout the day and their particular dietary requirements are well met. They understand the importance of everyday routines to avoid infection, by washing their hands at appropriate times throughout the day.

The childminder supports children to develop skills in information and communication technology, by introducing new experiences using age appropriate programmable toys, such as, remote control cars and digital cameras. These contribute to their social and economic well-being and development of their future skills. They are encouraged to count and recognise numbers as they undertake baking activities, such as making gingerbread people. They weigh the ingredients and count how many eyes, legs and arms they will need to make. They also learn about weight, size and colour during ball games.

The children are making good progress with their literacy skills as they enjoy choosing books from the good selection on offer and settling on the sofa with the childminder to listen to their chosen stories. The childminder is constantly encouraging the children's speech development as she talks to them and helps them to pronounce words correctly. They enjoy making marks using various different media, such as brushes and water outside and also making footprints with their feet. Their creativity is encouraged through various activities, such as playing with musical instruments, for example drums, dressing-up and making dens. The children are developing knowledge and understanding of the world around them by going on nature walks to collect leaves and seeds while learning about their different textures and shapes. They marvel at how smooth the conkers are and how the sycamore seeds twirl round as they fall to the ground. They enjoy looking after the wild birds by making bird feeders out of peanut butter and seeds. They learn about how substances change as they play with ice cubes and watch them melting in water. They comment on how cold and slippery the ice feels. They begin to show responsibility for their environment as they take part in recycling household items. Overall, the children benefit greatly from their time spent with the childminder.

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	1
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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