

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	105151
Inspection date	23/04/2010
Inspector	Susan Ennis

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 1997. She lives with her husband and two children aged 12 and 14 years in Luton, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There is level access to the premises. The family has one cat.

The childminder provides care on each weekday term-time and during school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range and is currently minding three children in this age range. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently six children on roll in this age group. Children on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register share the same facilities as those on the Early Years Register. The childminder has overall responsibility for the childminding practice and her co-childminder, her husband who is also registered, works in a supportive role.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The commitment and dedication demonstrated by the childminder enables her to offer an excellent standard of care and education to the children. Children clearly thrive and make excellent progress across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage because the childminder has developed highly effective practices and procedures for planning, assessing and promoting their learning. She and her co-minder value diversity and are highly effective in ensuring that children's uniqueness and individuality are recognised and that all are well integrated and achieving as much as they can. Excellent partnerships with parents contribute significantly to ensuring that the individual needs of each child are fully met. Thorough and effective monitoring of the setting ensures that the childminder and her co-minder have a comprehensive overview of their strengths. Through reflective practice and consultation with parents and children, they identify and promptly act upon any areas for improvement bringing about sustained continuous progression in all they do.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to reflect on your day to day practice to improve the outcomes for children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a very high commitment to promoting children's safety. She demonstrates an extremely good understanding of the procedures regarding safeguarding children and ensures that her co-minder is also up-to-date with the latest information. She also ensures that anyone coming into contact with the children is suitable to do so and does not leave them unattended with anyone not sufficiently checked. Extensive policies and procedures are also used effectively to promote children's welfare. They are cared for in a very safe, secure environment in which their safety is of paramount importance at all times. The home is checked on a daily basis and comprehensive risk assessments are regularly carried out on all areas used by the children including the various outings that they participate in. When on outings and visits the children wear high visibility jackets so that they can easily be seen by the childminder. They also wear wrist bands containing the childminder's contact details should they become separated from her. Ongoing explanations and regular activities about safety issues help the children develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, when safety equipment is borrowed from the council, the children through role play scenarios learn about keeping themselves safe when near the roads.

The childminder effectively and actively promotes equality and diversity and tackles unfair discrimination. Together with her co-minder she offers a service that is inclusive for all children and their families. All children are well integrated and their development in relation to their starting points is excellent. The childminder knows the children very well and gains a thorough understanding of each child's backgrounds and needs by, for example, asking the parents to complete the All about Me Sheet at the start of the placement. She effectively helps the children learn about and understand the society in which they live through activities, such as, eating foods from different countries and reading stories about, for example, 'The Friendly monster'. They also celebrate festivals about, for example, Saint George when they decorated the house with bunting and made roses out of tissue paper. They also looked up and printed off information about the legend of Saint George which the children then wanted to take into school to share with their friends and teacher. The childminder and her co-minder also act as positive role models as they are a part of Luton in Harmony which tries to encourage less prejudice and hatred.

The childminder's dedication to maintaining trusting and professional relationships with parents and other settings ensures that children are consistently cared for and that they are offered highly appropriate support. For example, the childminder ensures that children can still participate in extra activities such as Brownies and football by offering to take or collect them ensuring that they do not miss out because their parents are at work. Parents are routinely informed about their child's learning through use of a daily diary, continual interaction with the childminder and access to their child's learning journals where their development is recorded. Each child also has a scrap book containing pictures and photographs of the activities they enjoy acting as a lasting memory of their time at the childminders. Parents are also involved in their child's learning as they are

encouraged to participate in the activities taking place. For example, whilst children were finding out about oral health, the childminder devised a 'Brushing Teeth' chart for the families to complete at home developing the children's understanding of good hygiene practices.

The childminder has forged professional and sharing relationships with other settings that the children attend and with other childcare professionals. She set-up and runs the local Childminder group and is part of the National Childminding Network sharing good practice and supporting other childminders in their role. She works closely with the local pre-schools and schools to ensure that the care and education given is consistent. She is able to complement some of the activities taking place by, for example, following the schools trip to the London Aquarium, she encouraged the children to make an under the sea collage which is now proudly displayed in her home. She also involves the children in activities within the school, for example, celebrating Harvest by collecting food which is distributed to the elderly. This also encourages the children's thought and respect for others in the community.

The Childminder's infectious enthusiasm for her work and her genuine aim to provide high quality care means that she and her co-minder continuously evaluate their practice and make changes that improve the outcomes for all children and parents. For example, following the return of a parent questionnaire, it was highlighted that some parents felt that they did not always know what their child had been doing during the day. The childminder discussed this with the parents and quickly remedied the situation by placing a chalk board in the hallway which is updated on a daily basis with the information asked for. This also acts as a learning opportunity for the children who get involved in filling it in developing their writing and spelling skills. They also complete questionnaires about the childminder's practice detailing the things they enjoy with a particular favourite appearing to be a meal of meatballs with pasta. The childminder has an outstanding attitude to training which leads to rich and varied experiences for the children and together with her co-minder values the benefits of continuing professional development and reflection of their day-to-day practice.

The childminder provides a very welcoming and stimulating environment which is exceptionally conducive to children's learning and development. Resources are very well organised and storage is at child-level encouraging their self-selection and independent choices. With a playroom and large conservatory children are able to move about freely and with confidence. They also make good use of both the inside and outside areas to develop their play and learning. The childminder also makes full use of the facilities on offer within the local community including the Children's centre, parks and library where children are taken to develop their love of books and reading at an early age.

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

Children are consistently offered highly appropriate experiences that support them in making excellent progress in all areas of learning. The exceptional range of

child-initiated and adult-led activities ensures that their interests and knowledge are continually being extended. The childminder uses her extensive knowledge of children to adapt the activities and resources to ensure that all are fully included and their uniqueness catered for. For example, during song time the older children lead the singing whilst the younger children watch and listen enjoying the sounds and actions taking place, developing all their creative and language skills. Also during craft activities a full range of different sized equipment is provided ensuring that all the children can achieve their desired outcome using the tools age appropriately. All activities are clearly linked to the children's starting points, observations and assessments enabling the childminder to build on what the children know and plan for their continued development. For example, younger children who are developing their strong exploratory impulse are encouraged to play with items within a treasure basket developing their creative and physical skills as they enjoy banging the colander with the wooden spoon. Older children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world as they play with magnets in the water learning which shapes will attract and stick to each other. The childminder then extends the activity by encouraging the children to see what other materials in the garden might be magnetic with the children smiling with amazement when a magnet sticks to a part of their bike.

The children enjoy an extensive range of stimulating activities because the childminder uses her imagination to plan activities that enable her to draw out the learning experiences for the children. For example, 'Claude the Orang-utan' puppet is used to develop children's respect for others, their mark making skills and their confidence as he is taken home by the children, who then write in his book about the activities he has participated in whilst with them. These are then shared with the other children on his return. Children can also freely choose which resources to play with and are supported in their play by the childminder and co-minder. When children decide they want to ride the bike their sense of direction is encouraged as they try to ride around cones placed on the floor. They then decide that they would rather play with the cones themselves and again the childminder uses her childcare knowledge to extend the learning opportunities in place. For example, she encourages the children's positional language and problem solving as she asks them to place the purple cone on top of the orange one, the orange on the red and so on. She then encourages the children to take turns by letting herself and her co-minder have a go with the children giving them the instructions and clapping when they get it right.

Children also have an extensive range of free-flow activities enabling them to play both inside and outside. Whilst in the garden they develop their physical skills as they bounce on the trampoline learning to sit down then bounce upright again. They learn where food comes from as they plant items such as carrots and peppers to be measured and nurtured until they are good enough to eat. Their emotional development is comprehensively promoted as they develop secure and trusting relationships with each other and the childminder as they, for example, snuggle into her after having their morning sleep. A 'Feelings Tree' helps them to express themselves by using pictures and words if they are finding it hard to explain how they feel verbally. The childminder and her co-minder act as very positive role models praising the children's achievements and assisting them in making the right decisions. They are aware of the consistent boundaries in place,

having helped devise the house rules and behaviour management policy, and often police situations themselves reminding each other if unwanted behaviour is displayed.

Children thrive in this secure environment. They take part in routines that promote their safety and that of others including regularly practising the emergency fire drill and helping the childminder to carry out risk assessments when out and about. They use the picture clues to identify the hazards and then alert the childminder and others present to them. Some of the children even become quite frustrated with the state of the pavements and state ' I'm fed up with this. I'm going to ring the council!' Children are becoming aware of good hygiene practices because they are effectively supported to; for example, wash hands before eating using their own towel which they identify from the chart in the bathroom. Their understanding of healthy eating is resourcefully encouraged as they help the childminder put away the box of organic fruit and vegetables that are delivered and visit the local supermarket to buy unusual types fruit and vegetables to use in a food tasting activity.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met