

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	02/07/2010
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.

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 registered in 1987. She lives with her husband and two grown-up children in Luton, Bedfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There is a small stepped access to the premises. The family has no pets.

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 five 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 overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder offers a consistently safe, secure and welcoming environment in which all children thrive and where their development is soundly promoted. Her flexible planning ensures that children's interests are followed and that they enjoy their time with her. The childminder builds trusting relationships with parents and often cares for the children from a very young age. Through monitoring her daily practice, the childminder is gaining a picture of her strengths and areas for improvement. She is therefore able to make effective changes to improve the care and experiences she offers the children in her care. She demonstrates a positive commitment to her childminding and is enthusiastic about making and sustaining improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of planning, observation and assessment to further demonstrate children's progress towards the early learning goals and ensure that this information is shared regularly with parents
- develop further the use of initial starting points to more efficiently assess where children are in their development and plan for their next steps of learning
- update the record of risk assessment to include assessments for each specific outing or trip
- develop further children's understanding of the wider world by increasing the range of activities reflecting the diverse world in which we live.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective safeguarding policies and procedures ensure that children are well protected at all times. For example, the childminder has a good knowledge of child protection, having attended additional training to increase her knowledge, and has the required contact numbers in place for dealing with concerns should they arise. She also ensures that anyone coming into contact with the children is suitable to do so and has arranged emergency cover should she not be able to care for the children at any time. The childminder uses clear and practical procedures, such as, daily safety checks and robust risk assessments of all the areas used by the children, minimising the hazards and ensuring that they can move around freely and with confidence. For example, the safety gate at the bottom of the stairs was closed during the inspection visit in case any of the children tried to climb them whilst the childminder was talking to the inspector. Good practice also takes place when the children go on outings. They all wear coloured wrist bands containing the childminder's contact details in case they become separated from her. The childminder also carries details of all the children's emergency details and permission for emergency medical treatment in case any incidents occur. However, to further protect the children's safety, the record of risk assessments needs to be updated to include an assessment for each specific outing.

The childminder has a positive understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, enabling her to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and families. She works closely with the parents to ensure that she understands each child's background, needs and beliefs and ensures that she adheres to their wishes. Children are gently encouraged to recognise differences and respect diversity. This is encouraged through playing with resources, such as, dolls and play figures. However, this is an area for development to further increase children's understanding of the wider world.

The childminder builds trusting and professional relationships with parents ensuring that all relevant information is shared and a consistent approach given. Organised documentation, such as, a parent pack and portfolio, ensure that parents are effectively informed about the childminder's policies and procedures detailing her working ethos and good practice. Verbal interaction ensures that parents are fully informed about their child's day, but further improvement is required to also ensure that they are totally involved in their learning and development. The childminder demonstrates an awareness of liaising with other agencies and schools attended by the children and plans to develop this area of her work once they start attending other settings.

The childminder demonstrates a genuine commitment of her work and attends further training to improve her knowledge and the outcomes for the children. She reacts positively to the inspection process and has worked very hard to fully embrace the Early Years Foundation Stage since her last inspection. She regularly evaluates her practice by meeting with other childminders and asking parents to complete questionnaires about the service she provides. Parents demonstrate their positive thoughts about the childminder in, for example, references where they

express their thoughts about her being 'extremely reliable, professional and sensitive to the needs and feelings of the children.'

Children's individual development is positively promoted because the childminder has sound procedures in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. The good range of available resources is well used and the inclusive, child-friendly environment is conducive to children's learning. Low-level, labelled storage enables the children to freely choose which toys to play with and the use of different rooms in the house enables the children to play appropriately and safely. For example, when older children want to play with the building bricks a safety gate is placed on the doorway to ensure that the younger children do not access the area but ensures that the children can still be seen and supervised.

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

The childminder offers a sound range of opportunities to support the children to make satisfactory progress in the areas of learning and development. Her flexible approach to planning ensures that children's individual needs are met and their interests followed. For example, when children show an interest in the role play toys the childminder extends their imaginations by asking if the dolls have had their breakfasts yet as one of the children had just had theirs. Good information is gained from the parents about children's home lives, their likes and dislikes and their stage of development. However, as this information is not used immediately to feed into children's initial assessments areas of concern or for further challenge may not be highlighted. The childminder is generally aware of where children are in their development and has sufficient measures in place to demonstrate this. However, children's development is not optimally promoted because the documentation does not sufficiently demonstrate children's achievements or their next steps of progress.

The childminder ensures that there is a positive range of activities to stimulate children's interests. For example, a trip to watch the trains at the local station is developed and children's knowledge and understanding of the world is encouraged as they then experience going for a day trip on a train. They discover the natural world as they feed the ducks at the local park and develop their creative skills by doing some bark rubbing. They develop their social skills as they take part in the local Party in the Park and attend stay and play sessions experiencing gluing, water play and music and movement. Spontaneous activities also bring a lot of joy. During recent bad weather the children borrowed the childminder's clothes and boots so that they could participate in playing in the snow. Children are clearly settled with the childminder and demonstrate this by confidently moving from one room to the other, where they decide to play with a tray of coloured pasta, using spades to move it around. They are encouraged to use appropriate behaviour and are learning the consequences of their actions. House rules help them learn the boundaries in place and reminders from each other and the childminder assist them in adhering to them. The childminder acts as a positive role model and helps the children make the right choices. When children are playing well together they are praised by the childminder building their self-esteem and confidence.

Children's health and welfare are effectively promoted as the childminder takes positive steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. For example, posters in the bathroom act as sensitive reminders to wash their hands and all children have their own individual towels and flannels reducing the chance of cross-infection. Children are also learning about their own safety as they are reminded not to touch the letter box in case they hurt their fingers and regularly discuss road safety when out and about.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	3
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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