

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	123379
Inspection date	22/04/2010
Inspector	Naomi Brown
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 has been registered since 1996. She lives with her husband and three children aged 19, 17 and 14 years. They live in a two storey house on the outskirts of Harpenden. It is within walking distance to parks and schools. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, which consists of a lounge, kitchen, dining/family room, hall and cloakroom. The first floor is not used for childminding. The childminder is registered to care for six children, six in the early years age group when minding with an assistant. There are currently 13 children on roll.

There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have a cat.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well safeguarded and settled due to the childminder's strong understanding of her role and responsibilities in the setting. The childminder's enthusiasm and clear commitment to exceptional practice ensure that all children's individual needs are met at all times. Children make clear and measurable progress in her care as a result of exciting and engaging activity plans that clearly take their individual needs into account. The childminder values each child as an individual through her highly inclusive service which helps them to feel thoroughly secure and welcome in her home.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop links between assessment records and the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that parents are aware of all development stages

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's extremely strong organisational skills and very clear understanding of her role and responsibilities ensure that children are able to make excellent progress in a safe and welcoming and stimulating home environment where children thrive. The childminder has prepared comprehensive policies and procedures and her meticulous practice demonstrates how closely these are followed to promote children's welfare. Rigorous risk assessments and systems for ensuring that adults who come into contact with the children are suitable underpin children's continuing safety.

The childminder uses highly detailed learning journeys to give parents and carers very accurate information about their children's achievements. This contributes towards plans that are highly focussed on each child's individual needs. All documentation is rigorously maintained to ensure that all aspects of children's welfare and learning needs are met to a very high standard at all times. Parents have access to all documentation about the setting and their children, which helps them to have a clear picture of the childminder's firm commitment towards meeting all of their children's needs. The regular exchange of information between parents and the childminder is evident as she has detailed knowledge about children's individual situations and any information that may affect their behaviour. Levels of positive behaviour are high and the childminder and her assistant are very patient and calm and affectionate with any children who become upset. This strongly supports children to feel safe and secure in her home.

The childminder consistently meets children's welfare, learning and development needs very well through her strong focus on inclusive practice that takes into account all children's individual learning needs and styles. The childminder's enthusiastic approach towards planning engaging and stimulating learning opportunities ensures that her service is continually improving, which has an extremely positive effect on outcomes for all children. Self-evaluation systems clearly demonstrate the childminder's highly accurate vision of her service. Feedback the childminder acquires from parents and children is clearly used to further develop her practice for all children.

The childminder's mature attitude towards safeguarding all children in her care, coupled with extremely comprehensive policies and procedures, ensures that children are protected at all times. The childminder has arranged her home with a clear commitment towards keeping children safe and careful practising of fire drills with activities and themes surrounding give children the opportunity to become familiar with steps they can take to protect themselves. This firmly underpins their safety while they are with the childminder.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting as they experience an extremely varied range of activities that are carefully tailored to meet all of their learning and development needs. Highly accurate observations of children enable the childminder to plan an extremely varied and rich curriculum that is tailored to the needs of each child. Plans comprehensively cover all areas of learning and offer an extremely good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play, both indoors and outdoors. Activities are consistently extended in response to current events and children's spontaneous interests. This contributes towards the excellent progress that children make towards the early learning goals as they are consistently engaged in their play.

Children have excellent opportunities to adopt healthy lifestyles and develop skills for the future. For example, all children are given the opportunity to put on their own coats and are able to explain that they take off their coats when they come

inside as they would 'be too hot.' They are aware they can ask for help when they need it but the childminder gives them plenty of time to attempt to do things for themselves. Children wash their hands for mealtimes without prompting from the childminder and her assistant and thoroughly enjoy the healthy meals and snacks that have been prepared for them.

Children have excellent opportunities to enhance their physical development, both with small and large muscle activities. They have free access to a very well stocked outdoor area and delight in playing with the sandpit, building volcanoes from sand and flying toy aeroplanes around them. They talk about activities they have taken part in about aeroplanes and use words such as 'propeller' and 'wing'. When the propeller of a plane made from 'stickle bricks' falls off, children concentrate for a good level of time to fix the plane so that it can fly again, demonstrating their exceedingly well developed problem solving abilities. Assessments and observations give a highly accurate picture of children's progress so that parents can be fully informed about this. However, while the childminder is highly aware of the individual developmental stages of the Early Years Foundation Stage, this is not noted explicitly in their learning journals for parents to see.

The childminder and her assistant support children extremely well and they clearly feel very settled and secure in the home, regardless of how long they have been attending. Great care is taken to consider all aspects of children's individual backgrounds and circumstances and this ensures that all diversity in the setting is celebrated. This is particularly evident in the high level of support available for children who speak English as an additional language. An enticing range of activities and resources enable children to learn about other cultures and religions and celebrations of different abilities and cultures enable all the children in the setting to be inclusive and respectful in their own behaviour.

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