

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY342917
Inspection date	09/07/2010
Inspector	Jane Mount

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 was registered in October 2006. She lives with her husband and three children who are aged 15 years, 12 years and 10 years. All areas of the property are included in the registration except for the rooms situated on the second floor and the utility room situated on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The property is situated in a small village called Little Gaddesden in a rural area of Hertfordshire and the family have a dog, three cats, two chickens and a pet snake.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Overnight care is not included in the registration. The childminder works with up to two assistants, including her husband, at any one time. When working alone she is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years, of which, three may be in the early years age group including one child under a year. When working with others the childminder may care for up to a maximum of eight children under eight years of which six may be in the early years age group including two aged under one year. There are currently 25 children on roll, 10 of whom are in the early years age range and 11 of whom are in the later years age group. Currently, children between the ages of 11 months and 14 years attend the setting. The childminder provides a flexible childminding service.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and two local childminding group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a high quality service which enables children to flourish in an enabling and child-centred environment. Excellent partnerships with parents, carers and others positively contributes to the childminder's knowledge of children's individual needs and supports their continued development and progress. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded and well-organised documentation underpins a highly effective practice. Children's learning is purposefully promoted as the childminder tailors activities to the individual child. Close monitoring of the quality of the provision and evaluative assessment of the setting demonstrates the childminder's commitment to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further the use of a quality improvement process, such as self-evaluation, to monitor and extend effective practice and ensure continued

improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to protect children and to safeguard their welfare. For example, she is fully aware of the correct child protection procedures to follow should she have a concern as she regularly updates her knowledge through attending appropriate training and has guidance documents and publications readily available. An informative safeguarding policy which details how children's welfare is protected is in place and shared with parents and all relevant adults have appropriate background checks completed. Consequently, children's welfare is protected. Children's safety is paramount and the environment in which children are cared for is safe and well organised. For example, the childminder ensures children are closely supervised at all times and are fully supported in their play. Highly effective measures are taken to minimise hazards. For example, thorough and rigorous risk assessments are carried out which cover the home, garden and outings and ensure children remain safe at all times.

The childminder has a clear vision for the setting and works hard to provide a high quality service for the children and parents who attend. Good communication and a common sense of purpose ensures the childminder and her assistants are clear on their roles and responsibilities and they work well together as a team. The childminder has developed many processes to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of her practice. For example, feedback is actively sought from parents and children and a self-evaluation system has been introduced to ensure continuous improvement. Professional development takes high priority and children benefit greatly from a childminder who is continually updating and increasing her knowledge of childcare and child development. For example, the childminder is currently in the process of completing an early years degree and she regularly attends appropriate workshops and short courses.

The childminder effectively and efficiently organises her time and resources to ensure children's individual needs are met. Comprehensive policies and procedures are used effectively to protect children, promote their well-being and to support all to develop to their full potential. All documentation is well presented and very effectively shared with parents. Well-established and purposeful relationships with parents and carers ensures children's care and learning needs are fully promoted. The childminder shows a very strong commitment to inclusive practice and takes great care to find out about and to meet children's individual needs. For example, parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before the child commences at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time with the childminder. Parents are provided with exceptionally good quality information about the setting including a starter pack which outlines the ethos of the setting. An informative notice board, regular newsletters and a portfolio with the settings policies and procedures are also used to share information. Highly effective daily verbal communication ensures parents are fully informed with information also shared through a variety of other media including diaries, learning

journals, emails, texts and telephone calls. Excellent links are in place with other early years providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as, the local pre-school, nursery and school to fully promote the integration of care and education.

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

Children's learning is positively promoted through the childminder's excellent knowledge of child development and of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She uses the framework to effectively plan a broad and varied range of innovative play opportunities and experiences which cover the six areas of learning and which are adapted to individual children's learning needs and interests. Children's progress is closely monitored through highly effective observation and assessment systems and the information gained from these is used when planning future play experiences for children. Consequently, all children's learning needs are identified and catered for and children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Children learn to be confident and to have a positive attitude to learning because of the guidance and support they receive from the childminder. Adult-led and child-initiated activities are well balanced to encourage children to be active learners and the indoor and outdoor environments are used to their full potential. Children actively participate in an extensive range of stimulating play experiences in a dynamic and child-centred environment. They are making excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development because they share warm, friendly relationships with the childminder. Children's social skills are further enhanced through regular visits to toddler groups. All children are included and treated as individuals and from an early age children's independence is encouraged. This results in them being secure in their surroundings and feeling confident when making choices, such as, when accessing resources. The childminder interacts effectively promoting children's communication, language and literacy development. Children have extensive opportunities to develop skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. For example, they enjoy playing games, such as, bingo that incorporate numbers or singing songs that involve counting. Opportunities to use mathematical language within the daily routine are encouraged, such as, talking about bigger and smaller when playing with construction bricks. Children are able to express themselves creatively and keenly participate in a varied range of art and craft activities. For example, children delight in bubble painting or making patterns using pasta and paints. Children develop a strong sense of belonging as some of their art work is displayed. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is fully promoted. For example, they learn how to say simple phrases in a variety of languages and have opportunities to learn about different countries and cultures. They recently enjoyed learning how to make geometric patterns when learning about Islamic art and have visited a Chinese Restaurant to experience Chinese food which coincided with Chinese New Year. Children of all ages enjoy learning how to communicate using sign language. Children learn about the local community through outings, such as, visits to the library, parks and toddler groups. Children's understanding of the environment is increased through activities, such as, learning about recycling or investigating the wildlife that lives in the local stream when on walks. They enjoy

learning how to care for the childminder's chickens and feeding them.

The childminder is proactive in implementing highly effective strategies to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children in her care. Children's health is fully protected as excellent hygiene procedures are consistently applied to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Through discussion children learn about how to stay healthy. For example, they learn about the importance of using tissues to wipe their noses when they have a cold and know the reasons for covering their mouths when they cough. They are learning about personal care routines, such as, why they must wash their hands after visiting the toilet or before eating. Children's dietary needs are met well and they are provided with a variety of healthy and nutritious food choices. Children have regular opportunities to learn about healthy eating. For example, they discuss healthy food choices at mealtimes and enjoy collecting eggs from the childminder's chickens to make omelettes. Children's physical development is fully promoted and they learn that physical activity is good for them and can be fun. They delight in participating in regular walks and visits to the park where they particularly enjoy climbing on the tree trunks and exploring the environment. They participate in running races and then talk about the effects exercise can have on the body through feeling their hearts beating faster. They enjoy music and movement and love to dance and sing. Highly effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety is fully protected and children have extensive opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, when out walking children learn about how to stay safe when crossing roads and when playing in the garden are aware of the potential dangers and know to hold on tight when on the climbing frame. Children learn how to stay safe in an emergency, such as, a fire, and actively participate in regular fire drills. The childminder is a positive role model and secure relationships between the childminder and children enable children to feel safe and valued in the childminding environment. Children are highly valued as individuals and their self-esteem is built through excellent use of praise and encouragement by the childminder. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they are developing a clear understanding of their own needs and those of others. For example, younger children are learning to share and to take turns while older children are learning to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children play an active role in the setting and are given responsibilities. For example, they enjoy being 'waiter of the week' which involves helping at mealtimes including clearing bowls and plates from the table and serving food and giving out fruit.

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