

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/03/2011
Inspector	Tina Kelly
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 1995. She lives in St Albans, Hertfordshire, with her husband and two adult children. The whole house is used for childminding, children do not generally access upstairs as there is a downstairs cloakroom. The children have access to the secure garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register to care for three children. She is currently caring for six children in the early years age group on a part-time basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. Excellent relationships have developed with the families who she has worked with for many years. Information to ensure the children's individual needs are identified and met are well established. Effective planning and observations is in place and the childminder has started to use this information to plan for the children's learning. The paperwork for the well-being of the children and the efficient running of the setting is in place. The childminder evaluates her practice and is committed to improving outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure records of achievements, observations and planning are consistently linked to the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her role in safeguarding children. Effective procedures are in place to ensure any concerns are dealt with appropriately. Information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board is readily available and on display for parents. All adults in the household have appropriate background checks in place. Children are further protected and kept safe through well-managed routines and effective risk assessments that are regularly reviewed and updated. All areas used by the children, the garden and outings are monitored to identify and minimise risks to children of all ages.

Resources are of exceptionally good quality and variety. They are stored at low-level around the room to encourage children to explore and extend their own play ideas. The childminder is a very good role model. Children show a strong sense of security and feel safe in her care. She fully promotes good behaviour with lots of

praise and clear expectations. Children are very helpful in setting out new activities and in putting the toys and resources away before moving onto new activities or going out. Children are becoming aware of the importance of safety in the home. Children are confident and make their needs known to their carer. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own actions. The well-established routines and organisation contributes to children's strong sense of security.

Excellent relationships have developed with parents and some care arrangements have been in place for over three years. She cares for siblings and so provides a comprehensive and consistent service for many families. Termly meetings, day-to-day communication books and weekly information on the outings and events of the week, keep parents well informed about their children's individual care routines and the activities they have taken part in. A parent page at the front of each learning journey establishes the importance of these records and encourages them to share experiences and events from home. A questionnaire shows that parents are very happy with the care and service provided. They state that the service is professional, that the childminder has a genuine interest in the children she cares for and they can speak to her at any time. The information taken from the questionnaires is used to influence the self-evaluation process. This is used by the childminder to review her practice and enhance the provision. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been met, improving overall practice.

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

Children build secure relationships, they are happy and settled in their play. Having free access to the very good quality resources supports their independence. The childminder provides an inclusive environment where all children's individual interests and needs are recognised and met in full. Children are confident and show good communications skills for their age and stage of development. Their counting and problem solving skills are promoted by the childminder, who asks appropriate questions to extend and develop their understanding, language and learning. The childminder knows the children very well. They are involved in making choices throughout the day about snacks and what they would like to do next.

The children's learning journeys show they are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Observation and photographs show that they take part in a wide range of activities that are linked to their individual interests. The detail is comprehensive but does not show how the areas of learning are reflected in the activities provided. The weekly activity sheets show how children who attend part-time have the same opportunities throughout the week. However, links to the early learning goals are not consistent and do not reflect the resources that are made available to the children to promote and extend their early learning skills. The childminder plans flexibly for the various children's needs throughout the week. There are many opportunities for both child-initiated and adult-led activities. Children's social skills are developed at toddler groups and outings in the community. They enjoy catching the bus into the town centre to go for lunch.

Children gain great confidence as they are well supported when taking part in new experiences. Their understanding of the natural world is extended as they enjoy walking home from nursery and visits to the local children's farm, parks and play areas. The focused, planned topic of growing and planting promotes many aspects of the children's learning. They are beginning to learn about how long it will take for the plants to grow. They talk about how many seeds are needed for each of the children to plant. Children enjoy the physical experience of mixing and digging the compost and are beginning to learn about what plants can be eaten and those grown for flowers.

The daily routines are managed in a calm and quiet manner. The childminder is proactive in extending the children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Many aspects of being healthy are incorporated in the planned activities. Art work and photographs show children are beginning to understand the importance of hand washing and teeth cleaning. Information for parents of young babies includes sleep patterns and nappy changes. The childminder provides a sample menu that shows what nutritious meals and snacks are provided. Children have developed a strong bond with their carer and the other children in the household. They show a good sense of belonging as they move freely around the home. Their self-esteem is fully promoted in all aspects of the daily routines. Children are learning skills that prepare them for new experiences and develop their future learning.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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	1
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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