

## Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123318
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/03/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Diane Turner
<b>Type of setting</b>	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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband, who is also registered to work as her assistant, and two children aged 19 and 14 in a semi-detached house in St Albans, Hertfordshire. All of the ground floor of the childminder's home and the bathroom and a bedroom on the first floor are registered for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play to the rear of the premises and five cats and a tropical bird are kept as pets.

The childminder has a recognised childcare qualification at Level 3 and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for six children under eight years at any one time, three of whom may be within the early years age group. When the childminder is working with her assistant, the number of children who may be cared for at any one time can be increased to seven under eight years, four of whom may be in the early years age group. The childminder is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register. There are currently nine children on roll, five of whom are within the early years age group. They all attend on a part-time basis.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely welcoming and family-orientated setting where the highest priority is given to recognising and nurturing the uniqueness of each one, enabling them to flourish and reach their full potential. Children are offered an excellent range of learning opportunities, both in the home and the local environment, and become highly motivated and competent learners. Excellent relationships are established and maintained with all parents, ensuring highly effective channels of communication are promoted. The childminder demonstrates a tenacious approach to evaluating and continually improving her service, with her assistant, children and parents all fully involved in the process. This results in a service that is extremely inclusive and receptive to the needs and opinions of all its users.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- improving the recording of existing injuries.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The childminder has a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of her responsibilities to safeguard children and gives the highest priority to protecting them from harm. For example, she is extremely confident in discussing the possible indicators of abuse and how she would not hesitate in referring her concerns to the relevant authorities if she felt this was necessary. The childminder's home is maintained to high levels of safety in all areas and she empowers the children to manage their own risks. For example, the very young ones know to stop at the step and wait for help to negotiate this if needed. The childminder has comprehensive policies and procedures that very successfully underpin the highly effective management of the service and her documentation is meticulously maintained. The only exception to this is that existing injuries are not recorded on a separate page for each child, which does not ensure absolute confidentiality. The childminder works in a highly effective manner with her assistant, who has an excellent understanding of his role and responsibilities, providing invaluable support to the childminder and the children and enriching the service. Children have access to a very good range of resources, which they delight in using, and a real strength of the setting is the exciting way in which the use of books is promoted.

The childminder gives the highest priority to promoting equality and diversity and this is reflected in all areas of her service. Copious amounts of valuable information is gathered from parents before the placement begins, including visiting the children in their own home. This enables the childminder to accurately meet every aspect of their individual needs. The childminder has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the different ways in which children learn and she values each child's family background. For example, she provides excellent support for children who use languages in addition to English, steadfastly learning and using key words in that language to ensure the children feel secure. The childminder uses innovative ways to help the children to learn about the wider world and how other children's way of life can differ vastly from their own. For example, providing a wealth of photographs from her holidays to countries such as India, enabling the children to learn about animals native to the country, how people dress and their everyday lives.

The childminder has an exceptional approach to self-evaluation and is totally committed to continually improving her service and enhancing the outcomes for children. For example, she excitedly discusses the benefits of attending training and how she implements the knowledge she gains from this. She actively encourages other childminders to critique her practice, makes highly effective use of professional websites and, above all, seeks the opinions of parents and children regarding the care she offers. Any suggestions for improvement are acted on immediately. The childminder has clearly defined plans for future improvement, such as, undertaking a further childcare qualification at degree level.

The childminder gives the highest priority to establishing and continually maintaining excellent relationships with all parents. They receive information of a

very good quality and meticulous attention is given to ensuring they are kept fully informed of their children's care and learning through in-depth discussion and the sharing of their learning journals. Parents are very keen and willing to share their opinions of the service, and their comments are highly complimentary and leave no doubt that they hold the childminder in the highest regard. Highly effective links are established with providers of any other settings the children also attend, such as the local school and nursery. The reciprocal sharing of information is excellent, ensuring a shared approach to the children's care and learning that is second to none. This is endorsed in the written testimonies provided by staff at the school.

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

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, she discusses how it is vital to establish children's starting points in their learning through observation and close partnership working with parents and to be clear of what it is they are working towards. The childminder meticulously plans activities that are tailored to the children's individual needs but is also flexible and responsive to meeting their changing interests. The childminder ensures the children feel very safe in her care, knowing that they will not learn successfully unless they do so. For example, she ensures they feel a real part of her family, that they receive an abundance of praise for their achievements and that they know in advance of any visitors to the home and the reason for this.

The childminder is very enthusiastic in her approach which motivates the children to take part in the activities and she very skilfully interacts with them as they play, making this fun while extending and challenging their learning. As a result, the children make rapid progress and develop very valuable skills for the future. For example, the younger ones wait in anticipation as the childminder slowly unzips the bag of musical instruments and reveals what is inside. They join in with gusto as she starts off the singing of rhymes, such as 'twinkle, twinkle little star', delighting in using shakers and castanets to accompany this. The children clearly share the childminder's passion for books and stories. For example, they become captivated as she reads to them with a great deal of expression and they can hardly contain their excitement as they reveal what is under the flaps.

The childminder has highly effective systems in place to monitor and assess the children's progress and she is highly successful in empowering them to recognise and handle the different emotions they may feel. As a result, their behaviour is exemplary and they demonstrate that they are very inquisitive learners who from a very young age display a real thirst for knowledge. For example, they show awe and wonder as they observe ladybirds awakening in the garden, determinedly finding the corresponding picture in a reference book. The children have excellent opportunities to learn about what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They absolutely relish being outdoors in the fresh air, rushing to the door when the childminder suggests going into the garden, having to be reminded to put on their shoes first in their haste. The children become fully immersed as they play in the water, confidently learning about mathematical concepts, such as capacity, as they fill and empty containers. They show very good control of their bodies as they run around,

throw balls and use the rocker. Visits to the park to use the large play equipment, walks in the woods and dancing to music indoors complement these activities very well. The children develop a very positive attitude towards meal times, enjoying delicious home-cooked meals, such as roast chicken and fresh vegetables, for their lunch. From a very young age they clean their own hands with a wipe before eating, and when choosing fruit at the supermarket the childminder actively encourages them to feel the texture and smell items, such as mangoes, to establish if they are ripe.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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