

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	257246
Inspection date	23/03/2011
Inspector	Patricia Dawes
Type of setting	Childminder

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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 1998. She lives with her husband and one child aged 13 years in Halesowen, West Midlands. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a selection of cold water fish as pets.

This provision is registered by Ofsted on the early years and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Registers. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. There are currently four children on roll in the early years age range.

The childminder makes use of local facilities such as, parks, shops and the library. She attends the local toddler group on a regular basis and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the childminder's dedication, motivation and ambition which enables her to provide high quality care and education. Children's individual needs are extremely well met and positive action is taken to ensure that the provision is fully inclusive. The foundation curriculum is exceedingly well planned and delivered and enriches children's learning experiences. Partnerships with parents and other professionals involved in the children's care are strong and significant in ensuring highly effective continuity of care and learning. The excellent organisation of the provision and systems to monitor and evaluate the ongoing quality ensure outcomes for children continue to remain high.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further effective communication methods between settings to ensure that children's needs are met and there is continuity in their learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well safeguarded, with robust policies and procedures that are shared with parents. The childminder has an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children's welfare in line with local guidance. She keeps up-to-date with current issues about safeguarding through training and information. Suitability checks are carried out on all persons

who have unsupervised access to children, which provides reassurance to parents. Risk assessments and daily safety checks for both the indoor and outdoor play areas are extensively carried out, monitored and reviewed to ensure they are effective. Risk assessments for outings are updated regularly using a laminated sheet in the 'contact' book the childminder carries. Children are closely supervised and sleeping children are personally monitored by the childminder. Premises are safe and secure and children have use of high quality toys and equipment which helps to maintain their interest as well as providing an exciting range of learning experiences for them. All of this ensures children remain safe and that all risks are minimised.

The childminder puts a high priority on her personal development. She has attended training sessions and workshops relating to the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has allowed her to implement the framework in a highly effective way. Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision are extensive. She is in the process of completing a recognised childcare qualification and has used documentation from the course to assist her in reflecting on her practice and childminding service. She consults regularly with parents and includes their views in the process of self-evaluation allowing her to provide a service that is receptive to the needs of its users. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Overall, the childminder accurately identifies the strengths of her provision and areas for further development which will continue to improve outcomes for children.

The childminder places a strong emphasis on developing close working relationships with parents and carers. All children and families are valued and welcomed into the childminder's home. She takes great interest in important events in children's lives such as the arrival of a new baby, sharing and supporting their experiences. This helps children to feel valued as an individual and part of both their own families and the childminding group. Parents are kept informed through a range of extensive written policies and procedures, daily discussions and diary sheets where children's welfare, learning and achievements are recorded and shared. Parents contribute to their children's learning and development by providing information to the childminder on children's starting points, their daily routines and all other relevant information. They are regularly given the opportunity to share their opinions and provide feedback through questionnaires and this information is included in the childminder's self-evaluation. The childminder has planned to further improve her partnership with parents by producing a newsletter where she can share forthcoming events, children's activities and progress. She has identified this as a positive way of encouraging parents to contribute to the ongoing observation and assessment processes of their child's development.

The childminder has worked very well in partnership with other agencies, actively taking the lead role in supporting parents when seeking help to ensure that children's individual needs are recognized and supported. The partnership with other settings children have attended needs to be re-established for children who will be attending other settings in the new school year. The childminder shows commitment to developing this partnership and has highlighted this as an area for

improvement. Consequently, the continuity of children's care and learning is promoted very well and information is used to promote children's achievement and wellbeing.

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

Children make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals and in all areas of their development because the childminder has an excellent understanding of both child development and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Clear and well informed observations and assessments and the excellent use of photographs and captions of children's own descriptions all enhance their learning and development. The childminder effectively identifies and monitors each child's next steps to indicate progress in all six areas of learning. Individual children's learning journeys wonderfully reflect the dedication the childminder applies to promoting children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Warm and nurturing relationships created are reflected in the children's enthusiasm in what they do which significantly promotes them to be active learners. The wonderful stimulating range of activities and quality resources fully engage the children who are confident in making their own choices, and even the younger children are confident to find books they require at story time or sleep time. Children demonstrate loving and caring relationships with both the childminder and their peers. They are particularly affectionate and helpful towards children younger than themselves and will assist each other in simple tasks such as hanging up their own coats in the cupboard or sharing toys.

The childminder is skilled at planning activities that spark the children's interest and provide opportunities for them to investigate, explore and learn new skills. For example, children have the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables in a designated vegetable patch. Initially, the aim of the activity is for children to learn about healthy living and develop their knowledge and understanding of living things as they help to plant, nurture and harvest their crops. The childminder also plans to incorporate hunting for 'mini beasts' into this activity. They will improve their physical skills and learn about their own personal safety as they use gardening tools to plant and weed the vegetable patch.

The childminder uses her expert knowledge of ICT to encourage children to develop skills for the future. For example, children confidently use a voice recorder to record a message. The childminder adds a photograph to match the number on the machine and the child is able to both see and hear themselves when they press the corresponding number. Children enjoyed the activity immensely and so the childminder introduced further activities linked to other areas of their learning such as using the internet to find words, pictures and a programme for the nursery rhyme 'I'm a dingle dangle scarecrow'. This contributed to children's understanding of the use of information communication and technology equipment and communication, language and literacy.

Children benefit greatly from an exciting and stimulating outdoor play environment

which they explore with relish, enjoying playing with the extensive range of different activities provided such as the climbing frame, sand tray or washing pretend food items in the water tray. The garden also provides very good opportunities for children to learn about sustainability and healthy lifestyles as they plant and tend vegetables. Children are able to be physically active and develop their confidence as they set their own challenges using the equipment at groups and play venues they attend, such as chasing the ball through a tunnel or jumping into a ball pool. Children's imagination and creativity is exceedingly well supported through their developing role play and opportunities to use different media and materials in art and craft activities. Children have made foods from salt dough and dragons to celebrate Chinese new year.

The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of how to promote equality of opportunity and to raise children's awareness of the wider world. The childminder monitors the provision to ensure it is accessible to all children and adapts activities to meet the needs of children of different ages and abilities. Children have a sense of belonging and feel valued because the childminder gets to know children as unique individuals and welcomes children and families into her home. Children are very well behaved because the childminder provides clear and consistent boundaries allowing children to develop their knowledge of acceptable behaviour and encouraging them to share, take turns and engage in positive behaviour. They willingly share popular equipment and are praised and thanked for doing so. Gentle explanations are provided to help children understand right from wrong and the consequences of their actions on others. The excellent interaction between children and childminder helps promote positive and supportive relationships which helps children develop their personal and social skills extremely well.

Children's good health and wellbeing is exceedingly well-promoted through the good hygiene procedures used and by ensuring children's individual routines in relation to food and rest are respected. Children have a good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene and know to wash their hands when they come in from the garden, before mealtimes and after using the toilet. Healthy eating is actively encouraged and good quality healthy meals and snacks are provided by the childminder. Mealtimes are sociable occasions when children sit together and develop social skills and table manners. Children are involved in the preparation of food, such as making sandwiches for themselves and cookery activities. This engages children's interest and helps develop their understanding of healthy food and lifestyles. Children's understanding of keeping themselves safe is continually promoted through consistent reinforcement and activities, for example, practising road safety whilst out and about and fire evacuation safety in the setting to ensure that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. They handle equipment safely because the childminder guides them carefully.

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

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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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