

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	17/05/2011
Inspector	Barbara Wearing
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 1994. She lives with her adult child and 15 year old child, in the Knutsford area of East Cheshire. The whole house, with the exception of the childminder's bedroom, is used for childminding and there are fully enclosed front and rear gardens for outside play.

The childminder works alongside her partner, who is also a registered childminder, in the afternoons and school holidays. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children.

Currently they are minding eight children between them, four of whom are on the Early Years Register. All children currently attend on a part time basis. Care to children aged over five years to 11 years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and attends a number of groups and play facilities for young children, during the holidays. She is a qualified educational audiologist and holds an appropriate early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder and her family warmly welcome children into their busy and vibrant home and value them highly as unique individuals. Excellent partnerships are established between the childminder, her co-childminder, parents and other early years professionals. This enables them to share their skills and knowledge of the children in order to provide them with the best possible support in their care and learning. The childminder shows a thirst for knowledge and strong desire to continue to increase her skills in early years, using this to maintain and improve her exceptionally high quality childminding provision.

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 enhance termly assessments by clarifying intended next steps in children's development

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Careful consideration is given to ensuring children's safety and well-being is promoted in every aspect of the childminder's provision. This is reflected in her comprehensive portfolio, policies and procedures and records that underpin her excellent childminding service. She has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the signs of possible abuse and clear procedures to follow if she or her co-childminder has any concerns. Children are empowered as they encouraged making choices and share their feelings. They are listened to and become aware of their own rights. Therefore, they may be less vulnerable to abuse and more likely to share worries or concerns with the childminder. Rigorous risk assessments are carried out for activities children engage in, outings and for the home and the garden. These are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect how risks to individual children change as they develop new skills or interests. As with all of the childminder's practices, this includes observations parents have made at home. For example, as children become more adventurous when using large play equipment or become reluctant to hold hands when crossing the road, the childminder will then take appropriate action to reduce risks of accidental injury, talking to parents and giving children skills to keep themselves safe.

The childminder is highly driven and shows an enormous passion for early years and the continual development of her provision to children and their families. She increases her knowledge of early years through research, attending courses and discussion with other early years professionals. She shares her expertise with her co-childminder, parents and other childcare workers. She has written articles for early years publications and a number of e-books on various aspects of early years and childminding practices. Self-evaluation is an integral part of the childminder's way of working. She is constantly reviewing aspects of her childminding practices, with full involvement of children, parents and her co-childminder in identifying and implementing areas for development.

The childminder provides children with a rich, varied and imaginative range of experiences in and out of her home. The bright and stimulating play room offers children a wealth of freely accessible toys and resources that promote all areas of learning. Posters and displays reinforce and reflect children's learning. The environment is rich in positive images of diversity, offering children opportunities to make observations and ask questions about similarities and differences they observe. Children have continuous access to the garden, which includes a covered area, hard standing, grassed and bark area and provides a much loved outdoor learning environment in all weathers. The childminder ensures that activities offered to children values their different learning styles. Therefore, all children are motivated and inspired and learning is fun.

The childminder has established excellent links with staff at other early years settings children attend. They are involved, alongside parents and children, in the childminder's observation, assessment and planning processes for individual children. These have a significant impact in promoting children's welfare and in supporting them in their play and learning and transition to school. Partnerships

with parents are excellent. They are given a wealth of information regarding the childminders' practices in a variety of different formats. They are highly valued and fully involved as partners in their children's learning. Recently obtained feedback from parents demonstrates their appreciation for the excellent level of care and that the children are treated as part of the childminder's family.

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

Observation, assessment and planning systems are rigorous and meaningful. They demonstrate the childminder's expert knowledge of how children learn and how she supports them in reaching their full potential. They include starting points gathered from parents and regular observations of children's achievements. These are assessed on a termly basis to give a personal picture of a child's skills in each area of learning. Tracking sheets show children's excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Development records and plans show how the childminder intends to support children in their future development but intended next steps in their learning are not always clear.

Children are supremely confident and secure within the childminder's home and develop a high self-esteem. They are treated with huge amounts of care and respect which they also show to each other. Older children show a highly developed sense of fairness when organising with the childminder who should have the first go when playing skittles. They ensure that younger children are fully included and enthusiastically praise their achievements. Children become skilled communicators and develop excellent vocabularies. The childminder is mindful to ensure that quieter children also have opportunities to talk and make choices. Children have access to a wide range of books, story sacks and song sacks, developing their literacy skills and imaginations. They are eager to choose items from the song sack, making up their own song or singing a familiar rhyme related to the item. Photographs and plans demonstrate the wide variety of opportunities children have to make marks and patterns, developing their writing skills using different materials.

The childminder skilfully asks questions to promote children problem solving, numeracy and reasoning skills. Children recognise shapes on pictures they have made that morning. The childminder names the hexagon and together they count the number of sides. Children describe other shapes, such as, zig-zags and the childminder extends their learning, comparing it to the letter 'z'. They then find a 'z' in the alphabet book. She asks older children if they can recognise numerals on the fender of the train and asks younger children how many trains they have. Children explore which objects slide down the guttering the quickest and the childminder poses the question 'why'. They test out the theory that they are more likely to fall off if they are pushed harder and a child states that they might go quickly because the guttering is wet.

Children develop a love of the natural world. They have fun planting cress, talking about what it needs to make it grow and placing it in their herb garden. They

develop large muscle skills throwing and catching new tennis balls, playing with hoops and skittles. The childminder and co-childminder work together in promoting children's healthy lifestyles exceedingly well. The co-childminder is a qualified chef and involves children in preparing healthy, home cooked meals. The childminder plans a vast range of activities that promote government healthy eating campaigns and they have achieved a healthy eating award from the local authority. The childminder carries out regular healthy setting audits and has researched and written several e-books relating to promoting healthy lifestyles for children. The childminder talks to children about how to keep themselves safe in and out of the home. She uses books, toys and leaflets to prompt discussions about road safety, stranger danger and to talk about emotions. She ensures that children are able to develop independence and skills while minimising the risk of accidental injuries.

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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