

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/06/2011
Inspector	Wendy Dockerty
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 2010 and lives with her husband and two children aged eight years and two years, in the Leigh area of Lancashire. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder uses the whole of the house for childminding, with the exception of the front bedroom. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the property.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years, of whom two may be in the early years age group. There are currently three children on roll, all under five years, who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder walks or drives to nurseries and pre-schools to take and collect children, and also attends local groups. The childminder is supported by the local authority and is a member of the National Childminding Association. The family has pet rabbits.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of each child's welfare and development needs. Robust systems for observations, assessment and planning ensure that all children make significant progress in their learning and development. Children's safety and well-being are given high priority and meticulous risk assessments help to protect them from harm. Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers means that children's care needs are met and information is shared extremely well. The childminder has spent a great deal of time and effort reflecting on her provision and has completed a thorough self-evaluation document which has enabled her to improve the setting for children.

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 opportunities for children to make healthy choices by having drinking water readily available for them to pour their own drinks.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a significant understanding of safeguarding children. A detailed written policy is in place, which is shared with parents and includes the appropriate procedures to follow should there be any concerns regarding a child's welfare. The childminder has attended a safeguarding children training course and

has taken further steps to enhance her knowledge by obtaining in-depth information on how to protect children from harm. The meticulous written risk assessments cover all hazards that children may come into contact with during their time at the childminder's home and on outings. In addition, individual written risk assessments for each minded child have been put in place, which focus on the hazards specific to their age and development level. For example, she considers potential risks which are specific to crawling babies, toddlers and more independent older children. When children go out with the childminder to places of interest their safety is paramount, and the childminder takes significant steps to protect them from harm.

Partnerships with parents are superb. A wealth of information is provided to parents during the admissions procedure and throughout the time their children are cared for by the childminder. Parents are asked for their comments on a regular basis through questionnaires, and written termly reviews of children's progress are shared with them. They are often given opportunities to look through their child's development file and share achievements from home. Daily diaries, verbal discussions and regular newsletters ensure that parents are kept informed of the activities their children have enjoyed. The childminder cares for some children who attend other early years settings. Links have been established which enable the childminder to keep up to date with what the children have been learning about and what interests they have developed during their time at other settings. The childminder offers an inclusive provision, where all children are respected as individuals and helps children to learn about diversity and the wider world. The childminder has attended a sign language training course focused on supporting babies and young children with minimal spoken language.

The childminder has completed a detailed and reflective self-evaluation document. This has enabled her to review her provision and make changes which have had a very positive impact on the children who attend. The childminder has taken steps to tackle the areas identified for further improvement, such as developing interesting treasure baskets for children's exploration, attending further training and enrolling on a course towards a level 3 childcare qualification. The childminder is highly committed to continuous improvement.

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

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the needs of each child in her care. Extensive observations of children during their play are carried out regularly and recorded within their development folders. Comments on children's progress are linked to photographs of the children and refer to each area of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder assesses the children's progress and identifies next steps for their learning. This information is used to plan specific activities or areas to focus on with each child on an individual basis in the following weeks. These individual plans run alongside the wider plans for themed, ongoing activities.

The childminder supports children to make consistent progress in all areas through

a varied and innovative range of age-appropriate activities. Children talk about how they cared for caterpillars and observed them growing, forming their cocoon and then changing into beautiful butterflies. The children released them into the garden and watched them fly away. Children read relevant stories and make pictures of their own caterpillars to support their understanding of their life cycle. Children have helped to plant and care for a range of vegetables which are growing in the childminder's garden. Labels help the children to recognise which vegetables are growing and they identify the carrots, lettuce and potatoes. The childminder explains that it is time to harvest their potatoes as they are now ready in the soil underneath the plants. Children excitedly dig with small garden tools and their hands to find the potatoes hiding in the soil. The children enjoy learning about the natural environment and the importance of sustainability by growing vegetables to eat when they are ready. After counting and washing the potatoes, the childminder selects some which will be cooked for the children to eat later. Children use some of the potatoes to develop their imagination by cooking them in their role play kitchen. The childminder further extends this activity by cutting some potatoes in half and providing paints for the children to make potato prints. Children talk about the colours they are using and how the blue and red mixed together makes purple.

Children have many opportunities to develop their future skills in a vibrant and dynamic environment. Children develop their number skills in their play, have opportunities to practise their early writing skills as they draw pictures and write their own names, and use technological toys to develop their early understanding of information and communication technology. Everyday activities enable children to make excellent progress in all areas of learning and they are given a high level of choice in the activities they take part in. The childminder asks what children would like to do and encourages them to think about the choices they make. Children ask if they can feed the rabbits some banana after having their own snack and the childminder provides them with a chopping board and plastic knife to cut the pieces. Children are confident to take the food to the rabbits and talk about their different characters.

Children learn about diversity by celebrating festivals and cultural events such as Ramadam, Chinese New Year and the Queen's Birthday. Some books and toys reflect positive images of culture and disability, although these are not extensive. Children's health is well promoted as they learn about daily hygiene routines such as washing hands and the childminder provides a positive role model by following good hygiene procedures in the home to prevent cross infection. Although the childminder regularly offers drinks of juice to the children, they do not have drinking water readily accessible, to which they can help themselves if thirsty. The childminder enhances children's understanding of keeping themselves safe by practising fire drills, explaining to older children about using the emergency services and talks to them about stranger danger. Children demonstrate that they feel safe, secure and comfortable in the childminder's care. They are confident to move around the setting independently and treat the childminder's home as their own. The childminder treats children with respect and uses personal touches such as individually named pegs to ensure that each child feels welcomed into her home.

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	2
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	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	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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