

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	04/08/2011
Inspector	Alison Edwards
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

This childminder registered in 2010. She lives with her husband and two year old child in a house in the eastern outskirts of Leicester. Minded children have access to the ground floor of the house and the decked area of the rear garden. A dog and aquarium fish are kept as family pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years, including two in the early years age range. There are currently two children under the age of eight on roll, both of whom are in the early years age range. The childminder is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for older children. The childminder holds a recognised early years qualification at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is caring and affectionate in her dealings with children. Excellent partnerships with parents help her to quickly build a good awareness of each child's individual preferences and abilities and how to meet these. Consequently, children are confident and relaxed in her care and enjoy an interesting range of experiences and activities, helping them to make good progress in their development. The childminder shows a clear commitment to developing her initial high standards of provision to further enhance the quality of provision for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve existing records of risk assessment to document each type of outing taking account of their individual nature
- review ways to extend opportunities to challenge and extend children's thinking and help them make connections between all areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The well-qualified childminder organises her service effectively to meet children's needs. Essential records relating to each child's contact, personal and health details are methodically kept, helping to ensure that she has a good understanding of their individuality. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, specific to the setting, help to underpin the childminder's clear understanding of how to manage potential emergencies and difficulties, such as the need for an emergency evacuation of the premises or a child being uncollected. The childminder has

undertaken relevant training on safeguarding issues. This has provided her with a good awareness of what child abuse and neglect are, and of how to act promptly in accordance with agreed local and national procedures in the event of any concern about a child or any allegation of abuse. Children are cared for in a welcoming and stimulating family home where they begin to gain awareness of their environment and how to care for it, for example, by planting and growing sunflowers. The childminder makes systematic use of risk assessments to underpin the good supervision and careful precautions taken within the home to promote children's safety. Although she already takes practical steps to consider and minimise potential hazards to children when off the premises, she does not yet make consistently effective use of her records to document her assessments of risk for each type of outing.

The childminder has quickly developed excellent arrangements to work in partnership with parents. Prospective parents are extremely well-informed about the childminding service through initial visits and the childminder's comprehensive policy pack. In addition to providing daily diaries highlighting particular aspects of children's experiences and achievements with her, the childminder actively encourages parents to share their own ongoing observations of children's interests and activities at home to contribute to her own continuing assessments. She has quickly established very effective methods to frequently review each child's progress with parents, and to agree on priorities for future learning and ways to support these. She strongly encourages children to make links between their learning with her and at home, for example, through a library loan scheme. Frequent newsletters keep parents extremely well informed about developments within her service, such as the provision and use of new outdoor resources. From a very early stage, she has introduced the use of open-ended questionnaires to actively encourage parents to share their views and suggestions with her. She also gives extremely high priority to seeking and considering children's individual views and preferences when planning for the future use of resources and activities. The childminder has been proactive in seeking relevant information from early years settings which children previously attended, helping her to build on their previous experiences and abilities effectively. She has a clear understanding of the importance of liaising closely with other agencies, such as health professionals, to help support the identification and inclusion of any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The provision of a readily accessible range of good quality books and play resources reflecting different cultures, lifestyles and abilities effectively helps children recognise and accept aspects of diversity from an early age.

The childminder's previous experience within children's daycare has enabled her to benefit from a range of relevant local training opportunities, helping to ensure that she has a good awareness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how to support children's learning through well-planned, practical play and first-hand experiences. She has quickly established systematic arrangements to review her childminding provision, enabling her to identify many existing strengths and some priorities for further improvement, including the further development of outdoor play opportunities to extend children's existing opportunities for challenging and active learning across all areas of development.

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

There are good arrangements to help children develop a healthy lifestyle and understand how to stay safe. For example, pre-school children show good levels of independence in self-care skills, such as washing and drying their own hands thoroughly before eating, and are able to explain the reasons for doing this. They freely pour their own drinks from covered jugs of fresh water, ensuring that they are easily able to take sufficient fluids. They enjoy helping to prepare nutritious meals and snacks, which effectively contribute to a balanced diet. For example, they enthusiastically mix and flatten pizza dough before choosing from a selection of vegetable toppings, including peppers, sweetcorn and mushrooms. The childminder keeps careful track of children's changing movement skills and ensures that they have a good variety of indoor and outdoor experiences, helping to extend these. For example, younger babies develop their stability and coordination as they sway rhythmically and roll their arms. Older children develop their confidence and coordination as they climb steps and ladders with alternate feet when using slides and balancing equipment. Pre-school children show a good understanding of simple safety issues within the home, for example, explaining that the oven is 'dangerous because it is hot'. The childminder talks with them about how to act safely in the wider world, for example, by taking account of the 'red and green men' when crossing the road.

Younger toddlers readily develop good levels of security and confidence in the childminder's care. For example, they snuggle in to her when settling or waking from a nap. They enjoy looking for her reactions and approval when beginning to explore their immediate surroundings, for example, by clambering onto a low chair. The childminder uses books and stories, together with simple explanations, to help older toddlers and pre-school children take account of each other's feelings and needs. She effectively helps them to cooperate and negotiate with each other through simple explanation and the use of simple turn-taking games. Picture cue cards help them to remember and understand simple expectations for their behaviour and safety, such as sitting down when eating and drinking. Children are consistently busy and interested in their play, whether spontaneously developing their own imaginative ideas in solitary doll's house play or suggesting favourite songs to sing together.

The childminder already makes systematic use of observational records to assess children's current abilities and interests and to plan for their future learning across the areas of learning identified within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, they are developing a good basis for their future skills. For example, children about to move into other early years settings enjoy sharing carefully chosen stories about starting school. They gain confidence in their mark making abilities as the childminder encourages them to write their own names on their paintings and drawings. They use spoken language with growing confidence to recall experiences, such as recent outings, or to talk about their own preferences, such as what vegetables to add to their pizzas. Children gain a practical awareness of shape and size as they build with plastic construction sets or fit rail layout pieces together. The childminder encourages them to count in sequence and to use

number names accurately, for example, when seeing how many pieces of pizza there are. Children begin to investigate how things work from an early age, for example, as younger children use pull cords on cause and effect toys to create sounds or lights. They develop familiarity with aspects of everyday technology in pretend play, for example, when using walkie talkies or toy computers. They explore using sand and water in different ways, for example, to fill and empty containers of different sizes or to provide a 'home' for different types of plastic animals. The childminder shows that she values children's own imaginative ideas by displaying their independent paintings and drawings. She encourages their enjoyment of favourite songs and provides a good range of resources, such as dressing-up clothes, to promote their pretend play. However, the childminder is not yet fully confident in ways to challenge and extend children's thinking and help them make connections between different areas of their learning, for example, by extending opportunities for purposeful writing and practical problem solving in pretend play.

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	2
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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