

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/09/2011
Inspector	Susan Heap
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 1993. She lives with her husband in Abbey Hey, Manchester, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. The numbers and ages of children to be cared for may vary when the childminder is working with an assistant. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and regularly attends toddler and childminding groups. The family has a cat.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Warm and caring relationships are evident between the childminder and children. Most aspects of observation and assessment are good as are most aspects of safety, due to effective measures being in place. Activities are varied, interesting and specifically planned for each individual child's stage of development. As a result, children achieve and enjoy in their play and learning and their progress is excellent. The childminder has good quality working relationships with parents at all times and other professionals when applicable. This means that children's individual needs are fully met and are reflected in practice. The childminder has a secure understanding of any areas of weaknesses, which enables her to make continuous improvements to the service offered to all children in her care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement a system to monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals to ensure that any gaps in their learning are identified
- improve and develop the written risk assessment for each specific outing with the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded because the childminder places strong emphasis on children's safety and well-being both in the home and on outings. This is achieved through the completion and recording of good-quality written risk assessments

which are closely monitored and record any changes or specific hazards, such as, snow, however, risk assessments for outings lack sufficient detail. She has a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if she has any concerns about a child in her care. All adults in the home have completed the required vetting procedures. Fire drills are practised monthly which means children effectively learn what to do in an emergency. Child-sized tables, chairs and settees provide a very child-centred environment for children to play rest and sleep in comfort. Toys and equipment are stored at children's level in boxes labelled with words and pictures. These enable the children to develop their independence skills and make free choices in their play. Through reflecting on her daily practice, she accurately identifies areas for improvement which will have the most significant impact on the outcomes for children. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been completed and improved the organisation of documentation and children's safety.

Very good-quality written information about their children's care, in the form of policies and procedures, is given to parents and a wealth of information is displayed within the main play area. Positive relationships are built with parents through their daily verbal discussions, a daily 'Me to you' book, and parents add their own observations to their child's learning journey. The childminder also seeks parents' views through an annual parent questionnaire. Comments, such as 'the service you provide is excellent', 'my child is more independent and self-reliant' 'thank you for your support' and, 'she enjoys everyday she spends with you' demonstrate how parents are confident and assured by the high quality of care and activities offered. The childminder is fully aware of how to work with other settings that children may attend or other professionals when necessary. This ensures inclusion is reflected at all times.

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

The childminder is a caring and experienced practitioner who takes great pride in the service she provides and has a secure knowledge and understanding of each child in her care. She demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of how to promote children's learning and development. She carefully acquires and records children's starting points at registration which enables her to build upon their existing skills. This also helps children to settle well. Observations reflect children's interests and achievements and their progress is well documented in writing and in photographs. Next steps are clearly identified and planned for because the childminder has a secure understanding of how children learn through play. She provides activities which meticulously follow each child's individual needs and interests. As a result, they are able to participate in an excellent range of activities which sustain their interest, ensure their continued progress and cover all six areas of learning. These include challenges to extend children's skills. For example, they develop their physical skills through accessing balancing beams at the local toddler group. Systems to monitor any gaps in children's learning are in place though not always fully implemented.

Children develop a good understanding of dangers and how to stay safe when out in the community. For example, the children learn to use the Green Cross code through a planned activity and put this into practice when out walking. Children develop good levels of self-esteem and confidence through the consistent praise and rewards they receive. Each child receives stickers or certificates for their achievements and their learning journeys regularly show smiley faces or stars for their excellent progress.

The childminder has a positive attitude to healthy eating and a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy and balanced diet. Meals are varied and nutritious and complemented with mid morning snacks of fresh fruit and toast. Through their activities and discussions children learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Posters displaying the benefits of '5 fruit and vegetables a day' are displayed to reinforce their learning and promote discussion.

Excellent use is made of the local community groups or play centres to compliment the home-based care provided. This ensures children have lots of opportunities to develop their physical and social skills and to extend their learning. Photographs show them happily joining in parachute play, sensory play with sand, water, cornflour and water or shaving foam, or celebrating birthdays. They learn about culture and diversity from taking part in planned activities, such as Chinese New Year or Australia Day. They enjoy craft activities, using a variety of materials, such as paint and collage materials or using a variety of tools as they play with the dough. The childminder is resourceful and always searching for new toys and equipment which will meet children's changing development needs and interests. A recent success is an inexpensive interactive push button toy which helps to develop children's language, colour and shape recognition skills. Children show creativity and imagination while they talk on the telephone. They are confident in their play and interactions often returning to a favourite activity again and again, such as the play dough. The childminder has developed an excellent range of treasure baskets for children to explore. These include an excellent range of natural and metal materials, as well as a colour basket which links to the current theme of red.

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	1
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	2

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	1
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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met