

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	129702
Inspection date	08/11/2011
Inspector	Sheila Harrison

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 1996. She lives with her two children aged 14 and eight years in Tring, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house and two of the first floor bedrooms are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time, and is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are four children currently attending with varying attendance patterns within the early years age range.

The childminder is willing to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The childminder has a Level 3 child care qualification. She attends local parent and toddler groups. The family has two dogs and two guinea pigs.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very happy and make good progress in their learning. Strong links have developed with parents. They are kept very well informed of their children's progress and are encouraged to share what they know about their child. These close relationships ensure that the uniqueness of each child is fully recognised. Effective arrangements exist to ensure children's safety and health. The childminder develops close and efficient links with other child care professionals and the wider community. She is planning to link with other settings the children attend. The childminder has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and takes suitable steps to improve it.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain a regular two-way flow of information with providers who also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage
- enhance the mathematical potential of the outdoor environment, helping children to discover space, distance and measures through their physical activity.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is well managed due to the childminder's genuine commitment to safeguard children. The childminder has attended recent training and has the

Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures easily to hand for reference. The childminder completes comprehensive records for the efficient management of the early years provision, including the assessment of risks in the home and on outings. Parents are well informed of the childminder's procedures and she ensures all the contact details and permission slips are in good order and up-to-date. Children show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they frequently are involved in the emergency evacuation plan.

The childminder has established a positive and professional vision for her service. She reflects on her practice and has a commitment to continuous professional development. She has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and has achieved a child care qualification. She has continued with a well-planned programme of ongoing learning opportunities to ensure that her skills are consistently updated. The childminder has recently attended training on extending children's mathematical skills in the outdoor environment although she has yet to introduce aspects of this training into her practice. The childminder has strong links with the local children's centre and is the organiser of the local childminder cluster group. She has beneficial plans to plans to extend the space available to the children by using the lounge.

The childminder provides a welcoming and supportive environment. Children's learning is well supported as the childminder gives them ample individual attention. There is a plentiful range of good quality and age appropriate toys that are within easy reach for children to choose from. Children's names, photographs and art work is well-displayed giving a strong sense of belonging. The childminder provides an individualised service. She knows the children's likes and dislikes very well and ensures the children's comfort and eating patterns are well catered for. She encourages children to display positive attitudes and discuss the similarities and differences between themselves. There is a wide range of multi-cultural play equipment to raise children's awareness of diversity.

The childminder has developed a strong and effective relationship with the parents and there is a good two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise to meet the individual needs of the children. Parents comment how they are delighted with the care their children receives and there are many touching testimonials from previous parents. The childminder collects information on the child's starting points from the parents to ensure each child's individual needs are met. Parents are informed of their child's comfort and achievements through daily conversations and daily diaries and they are encouraged to contribute their comments on their child's development. The childminder is aware of the other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage for some of the children although she has yet to liaise with them limiting opportunities for effective continuity of care.

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

Children are making good progress in their learning and development. The childminder is skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning ensuring that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided. Her calm

approach and warm and playful interactions motivate young children well and help them to make progress. Young children settle quickly and have easy access to their favourite toys. Children have access to a wide range of books and the childminder sensitively supports children emerging language skills. The childminder undertakes regular, sensitive observations and accurate assessments of the child's development. She plans for the next steps in the children's development making use of information within the Early Years Foundation Stage. She uses the children interests to plan future experiences expanding opportunities for them to achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Children greatly enjoy visiting the local wildlife reserve. They use the binoculars to observe the birds and use non-fiction books to identify the different species when they return home. They observe the life cycle of a butterfly when one of the children brought a butterfly farm to the childminder's.

The childminder makes good use of the local community, children learn about the weather and seasons as they see the vegetables growing in pots and visits to the allotments. They celebrate the traditional festivals and acknowledge the festival of others with a wide range of art work. The childminder encourages the children to research information on the festivals to answer their queries. They look up the meaning of some of the signs and symbols associated with the festival of Diwali. Children have many valuable chances to meet with other children they all visit several local toddler groups.

The childminder provides purposeful play and exploration, both in and out of doors, with a balance of adult-led and child-led activities that fosters active learning. Children enjoy playing outside they experiment mixing sand and water. They play imaginatively with the play kitchen and learn to take turns on the large sit and ride tractor although ideas from recent training are not fully implemented. Relationships are good, children are making friends and they look forward to playing together. Their behaviour is managed well and all the children know the house rules. Young children are learning to keep themselves and others safe as they willingly help the childminder to tidy away the toys before they choose what toys they would like next.

Children show good awareness about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The childminder positively supports young children's hygiene routines by encouraging their efforts at independence. The children choose a clean individual towel and they learn to take turns to choose the favourite one. There are secure infection control measures and the childminder models good hygiene practices. Parents are well informed of the childminder's sickness procedures. Children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals and snacks each day which offer variety and choice. Fruit and fresh drinks are readily available to the children, their dietary needs and preferences are well known by the childminder who ensures that these are catered for.

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	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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

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