

## Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123525
<b>Inspection date</b>	19/09/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Sheldon
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childminder

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the childminding**

The childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives with her own son and one foster child aged fifteen in Sandridge, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the house, except for two of the bedrooms, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden and patio for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding six children on a part-time basis. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The childminder attends local parents and toddler groups. The family has a dog.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are safe and secure in the childminder's home. Their individual needs are exceptionally well met by the childminder throughout their day. She knows and understands each child and has a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has an inspirational ethos of caring for and nurturing each child. Strong, effective partnerships with parents ensure that they are kept up to date with and actively involved in their children's progress, and are able to continue to support their learning at home. The childminder's reflective practice, her commitment to continuous sustained improvement and her updated training result in a rich learning environment 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 arrangements for children who are ill or infectious by defining exclusion periods.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The childminder uses her extensive knowledge of safeguarding practices, gained through working with the Local Safeguarding Board as a foster parent, to ensure children are protected from harm. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are shared with parents, enabling them to be fully informed. The childminder consistently updates her own training in child protection and other appropriate areas. Visitors to the setting are required to sign in and out and their identification is checked. The regular comprehensive review of risk assessments ensures that hazards are identified and actions are taken to reduce any potential risks to children.

The environment is well organised and conducive to learning with children being able to make choices from a stimulating range of age-appropriate resources. Resources support all areas of learning well and are maintained in very good condition. A good range of books, for example, supports children's interest in the written word. Books of photographs show children on outings and particular activities in the setting, and the children enjoy looking at the images and recalling the events. The childminder is conscious of the children at all times and moves between rooms with them as they select activities, ensuring their safety and allowing them to develop independence and make decisions.

The childminder is both self-motivated and reflective in her practice, constantly seeking to improve the provision. She identifies areas for development and effectively addresses them. She regularly updates her training and brings the good practice from training courses she attends into her work effectively, such as supporting children in their language development. Individual needs of the children are met, particularly those who are older and younger so that all of the children feel included.

Partnership with parents is exceptional. The childminder knows the parents well having built supportive relationships with each family. This means that she can provide the appropriate level of support to each individual family. A parent commented that she is a calm, considerate and totally professional part of their lives, and that she cares for and understands their child fully. The childminder consults with parents on matters and practices that will affect their children, and, as a result, they feel fully informed and involved. Partnerships with other providers/professionals involved in children's lives, such as the local infant school, contribute well to supporting children's welfare and learning.

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

The childminder has a sound knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which she uses effectively to support children's learning in all six areas. Consequently, children are making outstanding progress in relation to their stating points. They flourish in the calm, supportive and homely environment. Children are highly active, happy and confident. There are excellent systems in place to observe, monitor and reflect on children's learning. A variety of appropriate systems are used to observe and record children's progress, such as photographs, written observations covering all six areas of learning, evidence of children's work and a summary of their progress towards achievement of developmental milestones. The childminder knows each child well, understands their needs and promotes their development by planning their individual next steps. She has high expectations of the children, who live up to them and enjoy the more challenging activities. For example, a child who was engaged in cutting up fruit for the fruit salad for lunch was proud of his achievements and exhilarated by his success.

Children are comfortable and confident in their environment and welcome visitors into the home. They have a strong sense of security and belonging in this home

and know their daily routine, anticipating what will be happening next; for example, they help to tidy up ahead of meal times. Children enjoy an appropriate mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities throughout the day and the childminder plans more challenging activities for the older children while the younger child sleeps, ensuring that the needs of all the children in her care are met. Every opportunity is taken to encourage the development of independence, such as the use of a step so children can reach the adult sink to wash their hands, and the children are involved in setting tables and serving themselves at meal times.

All of the children understand the importance of personal hygiene. They wash their hands before and after meals, clean their teeth and a child commented that they also wash their hands after touching the family pet. Healthy eating is promoted through the provision of nutritious home-cooked meals and healthy snacks. Children enjoy eating a wide range of fruit and vegetables at snack time and as desserts. Regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise are offered and, as a result, children are maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Robust policies and procedures are in place to promote children's good health, but the arrangements to ensure that children who are ill do not attend do not define exclusion periods.

The children are observed on a regular basis and the childminder knows them well. She uses this knowledge to plan effectively for their individual needs and, as a result, they are all making excellent progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas. Personal, social and emotional development is fostered through the daily routine. Children enjoy taking responsibility and understand the need to care for their setting and tidy up at the end of each activity. Communication, language and literacy is given high priority in the day. The childminder ensures she introduces new words to the children's vocabulary and encourages the children to use these words in their conversation. Children understand that books are a source of knowledge and spend time looking at and talking about the images, developing an early love of books. The older children are able to count up to ten and sing songs that include counting backwards with confidence. A wide range of appropriate and stimulating opportunities are planned for children to experience the outside world, including trips to the zoo, fire station and a local farm.

Children experience a diverse range of age-appropriate creative activities and show off their displayed artwork with pride. Children enjoy cookery activities and tasting their produce. They benefit from this wide range of activities and opportunities and are excited about learning and playing. Children understand what is expected of them and behave well. Good manners are encouraged as are sharing, taking turns and showing respect for others.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## **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
--	-----