

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	29/09/2011
Inspector	Clair Stockings
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 has been registered since 1996. She lives with her partner and her two sons aged 13 and 18 years. They live in a town house in St Albans, close to the city centre. The whole of the ground and first floor are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range and, of whom, not more than two may be under one year. She also offers care to children aged over eight years to 11 years. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and goes to several toddler groups regularly.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare, learning and development needs are superbly met by an experienced, caring and committed childminder. Children engage in highly purposeful play and overall there is an excellent range of resources to support children's learning and development. The childminder's extensive knowledge of the children in her care is demonstrated professionally through the way in which she talks about them and tailors her provision to meet their specific and individual requirements. She has fully embraced the changes introduced to childminding through the Early Years Foundation Stage and effectively works in partnership with parents, children and other settings and agencies. Highly effective systems for reviewing and evaluating her provision enable her to maintain continuous improvements and to identify any areas of development which may have an impact on 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:

- extending the resources available to further promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference within all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are superbly safeguarded and well protected in the setting because the childminder has an excellent knowledge of local safeguarding procedures. Well-

organised and highly effective written policies on safeguarding support her knowledge and are available to parents. All household members are suitably vetted. Children are kept exceptionally safe whilst in the childminder's care because she is very vigilant and supervises the children extremely well. Children display an exemplary understanding of safety issues as they follow the childminder's clear directions. Children are also further well protected because the childminder keeps comprehensive records, including risk assessments, accident, medication and attendance records.

The childminder organises the environment extremely well. Her home affords a good amount of clear floor space for children to play in, together with free access to the secure, enclosed garden. There is an ample range of exciting resources readily available to the children that enable them to thrive and make excellent progress in their progress and development. Although there is a smaller range of resources available to promote children's positive attitudes to diversity, the childminder is highly effective in ensuring that all children are fully included and integrated into her provision. She ensures that their specific needs are fully met through her impressively organised practices and procedures.

The childminder is very aware of her strengths and areas for further development. She continually looks for ways to improve her provision for the children and she sets herself ambitious and highly appropriate targets. The recommendation from the previous inspection in respect of showing children's starting points and progression and their links to the early learning goals outlined in the planning has been thoroughly and successfully addressed.

The childminder forms extremely close working relationships with parents and carers. She obtains detailed information about each child, such as their likes and dislikes as well as their dietary and personal care needs. This means that parents' wishes and children's individual needs are highly effectively met. A free flow of shared information means that both parents and childminder are kept very well informed about every aspect of the child's achievement, well-being and development. The childminder is committed to working very effectively in partnership with others in order to deliver outstanding outcomes for children. She closely liaises with other provisions and professionals involved with the children, thereby further enhancing their welfare and learning.

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

The exceptional organisation of the provision for their welfare, learning and development needs provides children with superb opportunities to play and learn through a varied range of rich and stimulating experiences. The childminder is highly knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage and uses this well to support children in their learning. This means that children are able to thrive and make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. The children are extremely well settled and they thoroughly enjoy taking part in a varied range of worthwhile and stimulating activities, both indoors and outdoors. They have abundant opportunities to express themselves creatively using paint, collage,

dough, and through imaginative role play. They have fun listening to stories and looking at the pictures in books. Such activities provide for the excellent development of children's communication, language and literacy skills. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they enjoy planting and growing vegetables from seeds, learning that they need water and sunlight to grow. Children use mathematical language as they play enthusiastically in the sand, counting the number of scoops it takes to fill a bucket. Children have good access to information and communication technology to support their learning. This contributes effectively in helping children acquire highly appropriate skills for their future lives.

The childminder undertakes systematic and spontaneous observations that she uses highly effectively to inform her planning. This means that she is able to successfully meet children's individual needs and interests through a significant range of experiences. The childminder has an exceptional knowledge of each of the children in her care and can talk in detail about what they can do and how she plans to move them on to their next identified stage of development. Thorough assessment records are in place within the children's learning journals. These records clearly identify children's starting points and future learning, illustrated by a wealth of photographic evidence. The intuitive ability of the childminder to positively engage in everything the children say and do enables them to feel valued. This further encourages children to become active and inquisitive learners. Regular outings to the local park, library and shops provide ample opportunity for the children to find out about and identify features in their local community and the wider world.

Children show a clear sense of security and feel very safe within the childminder's care. They approach her and her partner with ease and enjoy the enthusiastic responses they receive from them. Children are actively encouraged to develop a clear understanding of keeping safe indoors and outdoors. The home is rigorously assessed for risk and the childminder encourages children to develop a good understanding about road safety and stranger danger. The childminder has highly effective organisation of routines which helps young children to gain a strong sense of security. Children show a keen understanding of the importance of following good hygiene practices as they take their lead from the childminder. They enjoy fresh air and exercise on a daily basis and are able to make excellent choices about whether they play indoors or outdoors. Children benefit from being provided with a well-balanced diet which takes into account their individual dietary needs and requirements.

Children behave exceptionally well in the setting because the childminder gives clear explanations and sets highly appropriate boundaries. Children are developing a respect for themselves and others and are learning about other cultures and beliefs. This is because the childminder makes highly effective use of books and activities to introduce new ideas and promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference within the children.

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	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
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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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