

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY436163
Inspection date	02/05/2012
Inspector	Lindsay Hare
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 registered in 2011. She lives with her husband and two children aged three years and 16 months in St. Albans. The childminder uses the whole of the house for childminding and there is a secure garden for outside play. The childminder provides care before and after school all year round.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children, of which one can be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for one child who is in the early years age range. The family has no pets.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder has established good working relationships with parents and works closely with them to ensure children's individual needs are well met. Children make good progress in their learning and development because they are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities, although there is a weakness in the observational assessment. Children are gaining an awareness of the world around them, although there are limited resources and activities which reflect diversity. All of the required documentation is in place to promote and safeguard children's welfare. The childminder is developing her reflective practice and is committed to improving her service for children and families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the process of self-evaluation to include feedback from parents in order to further identify areas for improvement
- develop resources and activities that reflect positive images of diversity in order to increase children's awareness of the wider world
- improve the system of observational assessment so that it clearly shows how children are progressing towards the early learning goals

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children procedures, which is underpinned by a clear policy which is shared with parents. She understands the importance of informing Ofsted of any changes and all adults within the home have undergone checks to ensure their suitability. The

childminder supervises the children carefully and ensures the toys and materials they use are safe and appropriate for their ages. Risk assessments are comprehensive and ensure that hazards are identified and minimised. Well organised documentation and good record keeping promotes the safety and welfare of the children and underpins the good quality care offered. There are good procedures in place for the safe collection of children and for dealing with accidents and illness. All these factors contribute to the childminder safeguarding children effectively.

Clear written policies and procedures are professionally presented to share with parents so that they know about the childminding provision. Daily written information is individual to the child and is shared with parents so that they know about their child's day. The childminder has good relationships with parents; she gathers clear information from them so that she knows about children's individual interests and needs, and can provide a consistency of care. Good settling in procedures that are based around children's individual needs helps to support them in the transition between home and the childminder's home.

The childminder has started to reflect and evaluate her practice, identifying training needs in order to maintain continuous improvement, although no feedback has been sought from parents as yet. The childminder organises space and play resources effectively to meet children's needs; she knows the children well and is aware of their individual abilities. The childminder has strategies in place to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

The childminder has a very good understanding of how young children learn and this enables her to provide an interesting range of experiences and activities to support each child's learning and development. Planned activities focus on and extend children's interests, identified through the childminder's observations. Detailed evidence of children's learning is recorded although this is not fully used to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents have opportunities to contribute what they know about their child's achievements.

Children develop their early communication and literacy skills because the childminder ensures they have lots of good quality experiences to promote these skills. For example, children have access to a wide range of books which they enjoy and they visit the local library to choose their own additional books, having their passport stamped. Children's speech is encouraged as they play imaginatively, talking into the microphone on the cash till or pretending to be nurses and applying plasters to toys. The childminder extends this, singing songs that the children have made up themselves. They follow instructions in order to play the game 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' and take turns in being the 'wolf'. Children explore making marks as they do their 'work' in notepads and use the toy laptop and large calculator. They make their own letters putting them into

envelopes, sticking on stamps and then posting them in the toy post box. Children begin to be problem solvers as they competently fit puzzles together and confidently operate the computer, using both the keyboard and mouse. Children learn about number and colour through everyday activities, and gain awareness of weight and measurement through cooking activities as they measure ingredients to make bread and pizzas. These simple activities lay the foundations for children's future learning.

The childminder provides an inclusive environment where each child is valued and they are clearly relaxed and comfortable in her care. Young children demonstrate strong exploratory impulses and explore what is on offer with interest as they confidently move around to investigate toys and activities. For example, children used a large cardboard box to climb in, making it into their 'house' with the house number written on the door. They regularly go out in the local area helping them to make sense of the world and their place within it. They visit local toddler groups, the park and go on outings to the woods. Children are gaining an awareness of the world around them as they visit local amenities; however, there are limited resources available reflecting positive images of diversity.

Children enjoy varied opportunities for exercise; they practise their physical skills at the park on climbing apparatus, at soft play areas and in the garden as they ride the scooters. They are able to use their fork and spoon independently at meal times and practise fine motor skills as they peg washing out on a line in a game and develop scissor control as they cut play dough up. Children behave well because the childminder has clear boundaries to help them understand about responsible behaviour. She uses clear instructions and gentle reminders which helps them to learn about sharing resources and taking turns. The childminder encourages children to have a healthy attitude towards food, providing nutritious meals and snacks. Children are becoming aware of keeping themselves safe because the childminder gives simple explanations, such as why they shouldn't touch the stinging nettles on their nature trails and basic road safety. They regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure so that children know what to do in an emergency.

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	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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