

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY342229
Inspection date	02/03/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies

Type of setting	Childminder
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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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 2006. She lives with her two children aged eight and six years in a village close to St.Ives, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's bungalow house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Access into and out of the childminder's home is at ground level and there are downstairs toilet facilities. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, shops, parks, toddler groups. The family have a goldfish.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and has completed towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework. The childminder is currently working towards an Early Years degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a very child-led, high quality provision; children enjoy a very broad range of activities and learning experiences which helps them to make excellent progress in their learning and development. The childminder is exceptional at promoting inclusive practice, she truly recognises and values the uniqueness of each child and ensures their individual needs are met through highly effective communication with parents. Resources are very well deployed and children are thoroughly encouraged to become active learners. The childminder's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding, she regularly updates her knowledge and skills and this positively impacts on the children as outcomes for them are exemplary.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- developing even closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing specific information about children's next steps of learning so that these can be fully supported between settings.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a secure and in-depth knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures and a high level of commitment towards promoting children's safety. Extremely well-organised policies, procedures and records completely underpin children's safety and well-being. Robust risk assessments are in place for the premises, outdoor area and all types of outing undertaken with the children. The childminder constantly reappraises the environment and as a result, all potential hazards are minimised and children's safety is secured. A wealth of ongoing activities and reminders about safety issues help children build up their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, children are able to describe how they 'look for cars, motorbikes and bikes' as they use their 'listening ears' to cross roads safely.

The childminder demonstrates an infectious enthusiasm for her work and is highly motivated to continue to make changes that drive improvement and further improve the outcomes for children. Consequently, the childminder has learnt the benefits of self-evaluation and reflective practice and this secures her outstanding capacity to improve. The childminder values the benefits of continuing professional development and attends a wide range of training courses to extend her skills and support further improvement in her practice.

The childminder provides a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. She ensures that her home is warm and welcoming for all and promotes a sense of inclusion which recognises everyone as special and unique. The learning environment is organised and arranged in a way that very much facilitates active learning. Toys and resources are freely accessible to children in the designated toy room and they confidently choose what they wish to play with and take it out into the spacious play area in the lounge. Children feel a strong sense of belonging as they use their individual coat and towel hooks, see their photographs on the wall and make their own comments in the suggestion box. The childminder has an excellent understanding and appreciation of the importance of outdoor learning. Through this, children have great opportunities, for example, to learn about the world around them; digging and finding worms, planting seeds in the vegetable garden and taking care of sunflowers they have grown.

Partnerships with parents are outstanding. A wealth of information is given to parents so that they are clear about the service offered. The childminder has created a website which enables parents secure access to information relating to their child; a daily diary, personal planning for their child's future learning and detailed information about their child's learning, development and progress. Feedback from parents is very much welcomed as well as their input into the assessment of their child's learning. Testimonials from parents read extremely positively commenting that the childminder is very 'warm, approachable and creative' and that she has a 'brilliant rapport with the children'. The childminder has built up an effective partnership with other providers also caring for children that she cares for. Summaries of children's progress are shared and information relating to the children's day to day care and welfare is exchanged. The

childminder might consider how to further extend this partnership working, for example, to obtain and share specific information relating to children's next steps of learning so that these can be fully supported between settings.

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

The childminder truly recognises and embraces the individuality of all the children she cares for and, as a result, extremely warm relationships have been formed. This ensures that children feel safe, secure and very settled. Children are provided with a huge range of activities and learning experiences which enable them to make excellent progress in all areas of their learning. The childminder is highly knowledgeable about how children learn and uses these skills as she supports all types of activities. She very much takes their lead and continuously uses open-ended questions to extend children's learning and thinking. She knows the children very well. For example, when they ask for her help she is fully aware of their capabilities and asks them to try, giving them lots of praise when they achieve things independently. This gives them confidence in their abilities. The childminder constantly enables young children to think for themselves and to solve simple problems. For example, she asks 'How are we going to get the strawberry stalk off?' before allowing the child to use a knife to help prepare the fruit for snack.

Highly effective observation, assessment and planning systems have been implemented. Starting point information from parents gives the childminder a clear idea of what the child already knows and how she can begin to build on this. Regular observations are recorded and next steps identified. Personal plans for future learning are devised to ensure that all children get the most out of their learning, fulfil their potential and make rapid progress in their learning and development. Solid systems are in place to monitor the overall progress children are making towards the Early Learning Goals. General planning is flexible and takes true account of children's individual interests and suggestions. For example, one child requested making a pizza van which led to its creation using a large cardboard box.

Children are highly motivated learners. They demonstrate firm independence and self-care skills from a very early age. For example, very young children independently access their own tissues, wipe their noses and find the bin to dispose of the used tissues correctly. They behave very well because they are always actively engaged in activities that interest them. Children have many opportunities to mark-make. For example, they chalk on the patio slabs and are able to use crayons and paper to support all types of activities. Children's language development is very well supported due to the childminders skilful use of open ended questions and her ability to listen as children share ideas at length with her. Younger children's growing use of spoken language is reinforced with the use of British sign language. The childminders home is rich in print which encourages children to begin to recognise familiar words. Children are also taught an appreciation of other languages as they learn words in French. Counting is filtered through into everyday activities such as counting the octopus legs during a balloon

modelling session. Younger children are helped to problem solve. For example, as they look for dropped items, the childminder uses the opportunity to introduce positional language such as 'under the table' to help them locate the items. Older children confidently use size language in their play, for example, when they find a 'big, giant, worm'. Children are curious about things they observe such as a plastic container that blows air onto their face when squeezed or when they enquire what the pedals are for under the piano. They learn an appreciation of the diverse society that they live in through a wide range of activities, resources and discussions. All of these activities lay very secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children have excellent opportunities to express their creativity through a wide range of art and craft activities, role and imaginative play and music. For example, they explain how they pretended to get married and how they dressed up for the occasion. Children spend quality time in the fresh air on a regular basis in the large garden or at parks and places of interest. Children are beginning to gain much confidence in their physical abilities as they, for example, demonstrate how they can spin round or walk across a rope bridge. They are fully encouraged to embrace a healthy lifestyle through growing their own vegetables, helping to prepare meals and snacks and through games and posters displayed encouraging them to make healthy choices.

Children's welfare is extremely well promoted. All documentation which safeguards children's health is maintained to a high standard. The childminder has continuously refreshed her first aid qualification which keeps her knowledge very up-to-date and ensures that she is always able to effectively deal with minor injuries. Children are taught the importance of maintaining their own health and hygiene. They have individual hand towels which reduce the risk of cross-contamination and a step to the sink ensures that even the youngest children can begin to take practise good hygiene routines. The childminder is a trained chef and ensures that the meals and snacks provided by her are healthy, balanced and nutritious which promotes children's good health. She tries to broaden children's tastes through fun activities such as blackberry picking and then making and tasting a blackberry and apple pie. Drinks are freely accessible to children at all times, enabling them to help themselves to a drink when they feel thirsty. The childminder is a very positive role model for the children. She shows great respect for each child; she listens to their thoughts and feelings and responds positively to their choices, decisions and ideas. As a result, children show respect for each another and the childminder. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement as well as excellent levels of the childminder's attention and enthusiastic interaction. This helps them to build up a very high level of confidence and self-esteem.

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	2
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

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