

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY375595
Inspection date	07/09/2009
Inspector	Hazel Meadows

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

T: 08456 404040
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.

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 was registered in 2008. She lives with her husband and son aged three years in a house in south Ipswich. There is a slight slope to access to the premises and a downstairs cloakroom. The whole of the home is used for childminding activities but children predominantly play downstairs. There is a secure garden for outside play. The family has two cats, a terrapin in a tank and an enclosed fishpond outside.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years of age at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range, and is currently minding one child in the early years age range. She also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She walks or drives children to and from local schools and pre-schools, attends a local childminding group and local toddler groups. She takes children to local parks and play areas and to nearby places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a welcoming, stimulating and child-focussed environment and children are offered a broad variety of play and learning experiences, both in the home and on outings. She knows the children well and values their individuality. She has developed methods to monitor children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Most documentation and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare and safety. The childminder reflects on her practice to make ongoing improvements although she has not developed a systematic method of self-evaluation. She works closely with parents, establishing very positive and trusting partnerships, to promote continuity of children's care, learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- maintain a written record of any complaints and their outcome. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 30/09/2009

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

- develop a systematic method of self evaluation to highlight strengths and identify areas for improvement and include consultation and comments from parents
- ensure all equipment is used as per the manufacturers instructions to promote children's safety, for example, the trampoline.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises her home, time and resources well to support children and meet their varying routines and needs. She values children's individuality and has a positive and inclusive attitude and approach to diversity. This is reflected in her practice and policies and some of the resources and activities. The childminder has a robust understanding of safeguarding children and is clear of her role and responsibilities to protect children. She has attended relevant training, has a thorough written policy and knows what action to take if she had concerns about a child. The childminder is attentive to child safety and has written clear and comprehensive risk assessments for her home and different types of outings. She is proactive to identify, and swiftly rectify, any potential hazards for example, removing large books which may fall on children. However, manufacturer's recommendations to permit no more than one child at a time on the trampoline are not heeded, which could result in accidents.

The childminder has a commitment to ongoing improvement and has attended many training workshops. She now plans to make time to consolidate her knowledge and recognises the importance of applying it to her daily practice. She reflects informally on her practice but has not developed a method of self-evaluation to highlight strengths and identify areas for further improvement. The childminder has very well organised and well presented documentation which is stored in individual folders. Clearly written policies support her childminding and are reflected in practice. The policies, plus copies of her training certificates and other relevant information, are made available to the parents, however, she has not maintained a written record of complaints, which breaches requirements. She gathers comprehensive details about the children and has signed, written parental consents in place, to ensure children are cared for according to their parent's wishes.

The childminder develops very positive and trusting partnerships with parents and their comments and feedback are welcomed. She encourages frequent two-way communication, including a daily diary for each child, to ensure children's individual needs are met and to promote continuity of care. Written references, plus comments obtained from parents during the inspection, are positive about the care and information provided and the fun play and learning experiences available for their children. The childminder plans to establish links with other providers delivering the EYFS once the minded children begin to attend other settings.

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

Children are relaxed and happy with the childminder, her family and her home and interaction is fun and spontaneous. They can freely select from the wealth of good quality toys, books and resources, in the lounge and conservatory, which are easily accessible in low-level storage. They are able to make their own decisions and choices, which promotes their independence and enables them to initiate their own games. The broad range of good quality toys offers ongoing interest and challenge for the children as they progress in their learning and development. The childminder plays alongside the children at their level to support their learning and offers praise and encouragement for their efforts.

The childminder promotes learning through fun activities and many first hand experiences and children make good progress through the foundation stage. They enjoy exploring different media such as sand, paint, playdough and collage and examples of their artwork adorn the kitchen wall, helping them feel valued. Children's imaginative play is well supported with small world toys, a range of attractive dressing-up clothes and props plus buggies and dolls to encourage role play. Interesting action-reward toys and puzzles promote younger children's problem solving skills and encourage them to explore and persevere. Children begin to learn about and appreciate the natural world and living things. They visit local parks and forests where they gather leaves and explore the different shapes and colours. They sometimes visit local farm parks or the zoo where they encounter a variety of animals and they are fascinated by the childminder's pet terrapin, which they admire through the glass tank.

Children's communication skills are encouraged and supported well. The childminder talks freely with the children and is attentive to their comments or toddlers attempts at speaking. She gives children time to think and respond and listens attentively to them. Communication is further supported by visual prompts, for example a picture timetable of the day, which also assists children who have disabilities or children for whom English is an additional language. Children sometimes visit the local library and a range of readily accessible, appealing books fosters their interest in exploring books for pleasure. The childminder utilises Suffolk County Council Learning Journeys to record her observations of children's progress towards the early learning goals. Each child's progress is recorded in individual folders and observations are mostly used effectively to identify the next steps in their learning and development and to inform planning. The Learning Journeys are regularly shared with parents enabling them to make their own contributions

The childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child and tries to ensure all children are included at their own level. There is a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities, giving children chance to try out their own ideas. Activities are varied frequently to maintain and stimulate children's interest with good use made of the outdoor area. Clear boundaries and explanations help children understand what is acceptable and children are mostly well behaved. The childminder is firm and consistent in managing any unacceptable behaviour,

offering children clear warnings, explanations and options. She utilises positive strategies such as reward star chart and more praise and attention for positive behaviour.

Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise which promotes a healthy lifestyle. They regularly walk to and from school and local places of interest in the community, and this time is used by the childminder to help them learn about road safety. Children also delight in playing in the well-equipped garden, where they are able to develop their physical skills and competence using balls and ride on toys. They also have access to plus they have access to a trampoline, which could compromise their safety if more than one child is using it. Larger equipment is available at local parks and play areas, to offer older children a greater level of physical challenge. Excellent hygiene is well promoted and children are familiar with the good hygiene routine. They readily wash their own hands prior to snack or use wet wipes, which minimises the risk of cross-infection. Older children independently access the toilet and wash their hands, sometimes needing a reminder from the childminder, which is reinforced by picture prompts for hand washing in the cloakroom. Children are offered mostly healthy snacks of fruit, and sometimes rice pudding, and regular drinks ensure they are well hydrated. Children's routines are well maintained and supported in close co-operation with parents, for example, children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs.

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	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	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

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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	3
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