

## Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123246
<b>Inspection date</b>	02/06/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Gillian Charlesworth

<b>Type of setting</b>	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).

## Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1993 and is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA). She lives with her husband and their two adult children, along with their youngest child who is 14 years old. They live in the How Wood area of St Albans, Hertfordshire, close to shops, parks and schools. All areas of the property are utilised for childminding purposes although children mainly access the ground floor accommodation where there are toilet facilities. Undisturbed sleeps are provided on the first floor and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play with a step between the patio and grassed area. The family keep pet fish and have a pet caged rat that is kept in children's bedrooms.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group with varying attendance patterns. The childminder supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

The childminder collects children from the local school and attends activity sessions with the children regularly. She is working towards a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder is conscientious and has a professional commitment towards the role. Children are very well supported and their individual needs are recognised and met effectively. They all relish their time in the setting and most aspects of the learning and development arrangements ensure that children are making good progress, particularly with regard to their language. There are thoughtfully devised policies and procedures that overall, underpin the effective safeguarding and welfare arrangements and the strong partnerships with parents. The childminder strives for improvement and has worked hard at introducing self evaluation that accurately identifies many strengths and valuable aspects for further development.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further opportunities to encourage children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script
- develop further the records of learning and development to maintain a clear view of the learning journey for all children and using experiences children bring from home.

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

- ensure that a daily record of the names of all the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance is accurate and consistently maintained (Documentation).

03/06/2009

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

Parents are highly valued and comment that they feel 'lucky and privileged' to have this childminder. They highlight many strengths of the setting including the personal interaction children receive, the respect for parent's wishes and the effective strategies for promoting English as an additional language. Parents can view the childminder's portfolio at any time which includes a detailed complaints procedure. Questionnaires have been distributed and the childminder has acted on responses, providing daily diaries to give parents a more detailed account of children's activities and ongoing updates of their achievements and interests.

The childminder's practice is strong and is underpinned by records, policies and procedures that promote the safe and efficient management of children. For example, a wide range of parental permissions are sought, there are detailed records of accidents and medication, and children's records of information are updated annually or as circumstances change to ensure that individual needs are updated and met. Attendance records are in place but are not robust since a minority of children who attend flexibly on minimal hours are not entered. While this does not meet welfare requirements, there is minimal impact on the children attending who have plenty of support and good supervision. Safeguarding arrangements are underpinned by a secure knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and a genuine commitment to report concerns. Written policies are detailed and include the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Materials from recent training courses are readily available for reference purposes. The environment is risk assessed each day to ensure that the vast majority of hazards are addressed or boundaries agreed with children thereby minimising accidental injury. First aid qualifications are updated and Ofsted is informed appropriately of significant changes.

There is a drive towards continuous improvement. This is demonstrated by a commitment towards professional development and acting on parent's views. Self evaluation is in the early stages of development but significant effort has been made in accurately assessing the strengths and identifying valuable areas for improvement such as creating children's portfolios. There is a clear vision to develop self evaluation matching this more closely to the Early Years Foundation Stage and drawing on a range of sources and current research to be fully robust.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children have plentiful support and encouragement which ensures they flourish, and have many positive and motivating learning experiences. For example,

children's capabilities are stretched when they enjoy completing a 30 piece puzzle, identify shapes and numbers with the help of the childminder and are eager to take part in recognising numerals and counting to 10 with support. The puzzle illustrations and childminder's skilful interaction promote rich conversation and language for thinking as they recall prior experiences of animals at the zoo and the transport they used. Children can choose from the appropriate range of good quality resources that are purposefully chosen to extend their learning. For example, children are self-motivated and concentrate well when collaboratively building a train and identifying which parts to connect using screwdrivers nuts and bolts. They enjoy using drawing materials when these are provided and proudly show their work to the childminder. However, children are not making as much progress as they can in their mark making and writing skills because materials are not routinely available to utilise during play.

Children are active decision makers and are involved in planning when consulted on the daily activities and look forward to visits to the park. When such planned activities are occasionally curtailed, children are confident to find out when they can go, but are gently helped to understand that sometimes compromises have to be made. This respectful approach contributes towards the children's good behaviour. Strategies have been successful in promoting English for those who speak other European languages at home; consequently, all children can ably express themselves. Methods include sharing familiar words in home languages with all children and using sticker books to highlight common words. Young children's babble is constantly acknowledged and reinforced thus promoting their impulse to communicate.

Observations and assessment records are up-to-date and monitor older children's progress through tracker books which are currently being extended to reflect the early learning goals. While all children's progress can be seen in their daily diaries, tracker books are not used for those who attend for very short periods which potentially reduces the clarity of their learning journey. The childminder talks to children about whether they wish to include examples of their drawings in their records but is not yet extending the monitoring to encompass experiences from home.

There is a balance of adult and child-led activities with high regard for children's choice and promoting children's good health, well being and physical development. Children are invited to play in the garden and eagerly respond, proudly showing visitors their new sun hats while using sunscreen to prepare. They choose to play football and are energetic as they play collaboratively and competitively in the fresh air. They take turns and gleefully identify their achievements saying 'I did it' or 'I got it, hooray' as they kick the ball or run to fetch it but are not overly boisterous, therefore toddlers join in with confidence. The childminder sets out hoops, bean bags and small balls that provide children with opportunities to practise their co-ordination. She respects their choices when they select musical instruments and go off together singing about a favourite fireman character. Their interests are extended further when the childminder initiates action rhymes such as 'wheels on the bus' that promotes eager animated responses. As children try out the swing, they are aware of safe practises and say 'I stand back', walking away from the apparatus to allow another child a turn. Children decide when it is

time for an early lunch and the childminder respects this. As they return to the house, they use wet-wipes to clean their hands and some identify 'my hands are nice and clean', thereby showing awareness of the importance of hygiene practices.

## 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*

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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