

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	112832
Inspection date	10/08/2009
Inspector	Michelle Ann Parham

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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 1998. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder, and their two adult children in a house in a residential area of Widley in Hampshire. The ground floor of the property is accessible and is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden area suitable for outdoor play. There are two bedrooms allocated for sleeping or overnight care if required.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. When working with her husband, this number increases to eight children under eight years, of whom six may be in the early years age group. The childminder is currently caring for eight children in the early years age group and three children from seven to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association. She has a level 3 Developing Childminding Practice qualification and attends groups for children on a regular basis. The family have pet cats in the home.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is outstanding. The childminder is highly effective at meeting all requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensuring children's care, learning and development needs are efficiently addressed and progress across the five Every Child Matters outcomes is exemplary. She is fully supportive of all children, ensuring they are well integrated and achieving as much as they can, overcoming any barriers which could prevent this. Working in partnership with her co-childminder, she strives to provide a high quality service and continuously improve through keeping up to date with and responding positively to changes, attending further training and taking account of the recommendations made at the previous inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review whether sufficient information is collated for new children's starting points to ensure they will be stimulated and challenged.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is exceptionally well organised. She provides a service to meet the individual needs of children and also to support the family as a whole. All documentation is in place and maintained to a very high standard. Resources and the environment are extremely well organised to promote learning. Children

happily initiate their own choice of play and are included in consultation. Assessment records show sensitive observation of children. Their next steps in learning are identified and planned for to ensure learning and development are continuously occurring. Suitable documentation is used to collate information from parents about children's starting points. The childminder uses an 'All about me' form but the information supplied is brief in some parts. Comprehensive self-evaluation identifies strengths and areas for development. The views of both children and parents are actively sought, through questionnaires and discussion. Children benefit from the childminder forging excellent links with parents and other key persons, including outside agencies, to ensure they get the individual support they need. Highly effective systems are in place to share information using daily diaries, learning journeys, regular meetings and photographs. The childminder meets with each child's key person at pre-school at least every half term and more frequently if required. She is extremely flexible and offers out of hours care to support the family unit and to ensure consistency for children. Parents are fully aware of operational practice as they are supplied with a wealth of written policy information via hard copy or email.

The childminder is clear of signs and symptoms that may cause concerns and of the procedure to safeguard children. All hazards in the home and garden are identified and minimised using effective safety measures, such as gates, cupboard locks, socket covers and safe storage of hazardous materials. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out for the home and for outings. Children learn how to keep safe through fun yet worthwhile activities, such as a road safety role play activity using a zebra crossing mat and crossing patrol officer outfit and stick. The childminder also provides identity cards for outings, wrist bands and high visibility tabards, which further contribute to children's safety.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children have a varied selection of very good quality play resources and experiences at the setting. The childminder is highly effective at extending learning during fun activities. As the children are making fairy cakes, for example, she encourages them to investigate the texture of the ingredients and how they change as they mix together, and to explore measurements and count as they carefully fill the paper cases. Children also begin to gain an understanding of time as she talks about how long the cakes will cook in the oven. As a result, children develop an understanding of mathematical concepts, creativity and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Learning through natural play and activities seamlessly occurs as the childminder is skilled at ensuring children are fully involved and follows their interests. For example, as a child was interested in caterpillars, children learnt about lifecycles by using books and small world models, and by following the process with real caterpillars, which was a wonderful activity for children to learn about the natural world. Children learn to problem solve, working out how the Brio track fits together, for example, and design and create using construction equipment such as K'nex, Lego, Duplo and Sticklebricks. They also have excellent resources that promote communication skills, such as using puppets at story or singing time, which is particularly effective for children who are less confident. They can also recognise their own name as they self-register. They

benefit from visiting the library and having a lovely selection of fiction and non-fiction books to promote reading for pleasure and help them to understand that text has meaning.

Children enjoy a balance of adult- and child-led activities, and are confident to initiate their own choices of play as they self-select resources. They are extremely well supported and supervised as the childminder works in partnership with her husband; as a result, children receive lots of individual time and attention. Their work is displayed prominently in the dedicated conservatory playroom or in their individual file, which contributes to them feeling valued and developing good self-esteem. Independence is highly promoted as children are encouraged to learn self-care skills. For example, they help to prepare snack, cutting up fruit and pouring their own drinks. Children thrive on special tasks, such as setting tables or cleaning up after baking, which once again helps them feel important and ultimately contributes to their willingness to participate and be a positive member of the group. Behaviour is very good at the setting, with children engaging extremely well with their peers and showing care and consideration for younger children. The childminder is a positive role model, encouraging good manners, being kind, sharing and taking turns. Children receive an abundance of praise and encouragement and through discussion have devised simple house rules. A wide range of resources portray positive images of all members of society. Children learn about other cultures and events through show and tell or activities to celebrate events such as Divali or Chinese New Year.

Children benefit from an abundance of weekly outings into the community to places such as nature walks and trips to the library, childminder and toddler groups, the beach and Sea Life centre. They also have free flow into the garden at the setting which ensures they have excellent opportunities for fresh air and exercise, socialising in larger groups and gaining an understanding of the wider world and community. Their good health is further promoted as they learn about healthy eating at the setting and practise personal hygiene skills, such as washing hands regularly and cleaning teeth, understanding why it is important to do so. As a result, children are encouraged to develop habits for a healthy lifestyle. The childminder is fully aware of children's capabilities and adapts activities to ensure all can participate safely and receive sufficient challenge, with particular regard for children who may need additional support. A rich and well balanced curriculum helps children develop important skills to help with their future economic well-being. Children develop knowledge and understanding of technology as they use the computer and laptop and interactive toys such as a microphone. Children enjoy lots of role play and small world play which promotes communication and imagination as they imitate home life, which is often important to help younger children feel secure and settled. Children can express themselves creatively using musical instruments, favourite action songs and rhymes and musical CDs which they happily dance and sing along to during focus activities or free play, evidencing how they are relaxed and content in the setting. The childminder forms trusting relationships with the children. She has a lovely warm, friendly manner and evidently enjoys her role. Children are very happy and have fun, making excellent progress as the childminder provides worthwhile activities and experiences that follow their interests and build on what they know and can do.

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

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	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