

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	510849
Inspection date	05/05/2009
Inspector	Janet Armstrong

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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 has been registered since 1996. She lives with her husband and three adult sons in a semi-detached house in Canford Heath, Poole, Dorset. The ground floor is used as the main accommodation for childminding purposes. This comprises of a living/dining room, conservatory and kitchen. Rest and toilet facilities are available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have a pet cat.

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 six children, three of whom may be in the early years age group. There are currently six children on roll, four of whom are in the early years age range and all attend on a part time basis. She also cares for children over eight years of age. The childminder works alongside an assistant as required. The childminder is accredited to offer funded nursery education and holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Childcare learning and development. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and the Poole Childminding Network.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good and children's welfare and learning outcomes are promoted very well. The childminder's home is warm, welcoming and homely and children are comfortable and relaxed, enjoying the space to play freely. They are confident and settled, with high levels of self-esteem and able to access many resources independently. The childminder is calm and patient in her approach and interacts positively with the children. She knows them well and uses this information to support and challenge their learning, especially their language and problem solving skills. This means that children are making strong progress in these areas. There is very good capacity to maintain continuous improvement as the childminder uses self-evaluation systems efficiently to identify her strengths to help to make improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the systems for observation and assessment to enable the children's identified next steps in their learning to be built on to further extend the progress they are making through all six areas of learning
- further improve the accessibility of play resources to encourage and enable all children to make independent choices in their play

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is very well organised. Her written documentation is clear, up-to-date and reviewed regularly to support her. She makes good use of her time to ensure children are happy, safe and learning through their play. The childminder has a positive attitude to her role and is dedicated in providing high quality care and education to the children in her care and their families. She attends regular training to update her knowledge and skills. For example, Early Years Foundation Stage training, which has given her a clearer understanding of how children learn. The childminder uses her self-evaluation systems well to identify her strengths and monitor her effectiveness, which is reviewed regularly.

There are excellent systems in place that enable the childminder to work effectively with parents and other early years settings that the children attend. She has a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures in place that parents receive. Daily discussions and regular sharing of the children's records of assessment means that both parties are kept well informed of any issues, achievements and interests enjoyed by the children. A communication book used with other early years settings means that both parties are able to work together to meet the children's care and learning needs. This means that children receive consistency and continuity in their care, promoting their sense of belonging and security.

Children's safety is highly prioritised. The childminder has a secure knowledge of child protection issues and the correct procedures to follow should she have a concern about a child in her care. She takes positive steps to provide a safe and secure environment for children. Daily risk assessments are supported by written documentation that is reviewed regularly to monitor and address any potential hazards. For example, smoke alarms are tested weekly, potential risks on outings are monitored and addressed as necessary, fire drills are practised with the children and emergency procedures are in place and shared with parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted to a very high standard. Children have an excellent introduction to being healthy and staying safe. They embrace the opportunity to taste new foods as part of celebrating different festivals, such as Chinese New Year and thoroughly enjoy a wide range of different fruits at snack time. They learn about realistic hazards in their daily lives through their play. For example, in role play, they recognise the hazards of 'hot cups of tea' and how to be careful when using the oven as it can 'burn'.

Children are happy, cheerful and very content in this homely environment. They interact and enjoy the company of the childminder, actively seeking her support in their play choices and needs. Whilst they have access to a range of play resources, they are not always confident or able to access some of their choices independently.

Children are confident communicators. They use their language securely to share their thoughts, needs and ideas to extend their play and seek answers. For example, they confidently ask the childminder to get them toys and activities of their choice. They enjoy books together and explore and discuss what they see.

Children especially enjoy jigsaw puzzles. They receive excellent support from the childminder who is highly skilled at using open-ended questioning to challenge their thinking, recognise numbers and get the children to have a go. For example, a three-year-old is able to count and recognise the numerals on domino pieces up to 10, 'one and a zero'. When completing a challenging puzzle, a three-year-old is able to work out where the pieces go through listening to clues and instructions from the childminder that enable them to take action, such as looking at the straight lines, colours and pictures. When completing a threading activity, a three-year-old is able to listen to the instructions to help keep the knotted end from falling out. They are able to rectify the problem and become independent in their ability to concentrate, focus and problem solve.

The childminder's observation and assessment systems work well to show the activities the children are involved in. They are supported by photographs and record what the children are learning, linked to the aspects and steps within the six areas of learning. The childminder uses her knowledge of each individual child well to support and challenge their learning. A learning pathway identifies the next steps in this journey, which are completed every few months. The current systems do not fully show how these next steps are being built on to fully extend and push the children's learning to ensure they make the best possible progress in each area of their learning. The children's records of assessment are successfully shared with parents on a regular basis who support the childminder's written observations with comments on what they know about their child and what they are doing at home to support this.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
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?	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?	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?	2
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?	2
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?	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