

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY314597
Inspection date	02/09/2009
Inspector	Jan Leo
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 2005. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder, in Flackwell Heath near High Wycombe. The whole of the childminder's first floor flat, except the master bedroom, is available for childminding and there is an enclosed, communal garden available for outside play with supervision.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. When working alone, she may care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years, of whom three may be in the early years age range. The numbers change slightly when she works alongside her husband and together they can care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years of whom four may be in the early years age group. The couple currently care for 18 children under the age of eight years of whom 10 are in the early years age range. All the children attend on a part time basis.

The childminder is a member of the Buckinghamshire Community Childminding Network. She has experience of caring for children with complex needs and predominantly cares for high dependency children who require additional support from a range of health professionals.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder is fully committed to the children in her care and is exceptionally skilled in meeting their individual needs to overcome their specific difficulties. Some of the children receive respite care and are on short term placements but this does not prevent her from building very strong bonds to ensure all children feel safe. The childminder constantly reviews her practice to meet ever changing needs and she has extremely good working relationships with all associated adults in order to ensure consistency and guarantee effectiveness. The childminder attends appropriate training to stay up to date and develop her own knowledge and skills further. She has very clear aims to broaden children's experiences and extend her service, putting the children first with everything she does. The childminder has robust safety procedures in place to safeguard children from harm and she has a very secure understanding of child protection issues and the procedure to follow if she has concerns about a child.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- promote healthy eating further and help children broaden their tastes by routinely including vegetables on the menu each day.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has experience of safeguarding procedures and first hand knowledge of professional action used to safeguard children from harm. She holds useful reference material on file to aid a referral if she has concerns about a child and fully understands her responsibility to protect children at all times. The childminder has very well thought out evacuation procedures, based on advice from the fire service, to ensure all children escape safely from the first floor flat should the need arise. Clear risk assessments are in place, covering safety both on and off site, and these are reviewed regularly, as required, to address hazards as children grow and develop. All children get to know both childminders equally well, developing strong bonds in order to build security and provide continuity if one childminder is not working. As a result, all children feel very safe within the household and are eager to attend.

The children have free access to a wide range of very appropriate resources and they access them without help to develop their independence. They use skittles to develop coordination and physical skills, draw and colour to help gain control over their movements, and creatively 'play' musical instruments as a small and sociable group. The childminder has balls with flashing lights and toys with buttons, noises and textures to interest deaf children, and she supervises play very carefully to maintain safety and help all the children to become sociable and considerate youngsters. The childminder shares supervision with her husband very effectively and as a result, all children receive a high level of support and behaviour is very good.

The parents value the service highly, appreciating the individuality of care arrangements and open communication provided to keep them fully involved with their children's development. They see all essential information and share clear and informative progress records with the childminder to understand the aims, strategies and achievements relating to their children. The childminder liaises fully with other adults involved in any child's care, in order to enhance what they do elsewhere and adopt a consistent approach to their ongoing development. She routinely ascertains children's starting points and plans specific activities to overcome difficulties and help children feel fully accepted and valued for their individualism. As a result, all children are sociable, polite, happy and eager to join in the activities on offer. They show consideration to their peers, confidently make their feelings known and develop high self-esteem.

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

The children have a very clear understanding of what the childminder expects. They choose what to do and politely ask before getting different resources out when changing their game. They listen well to instructions, remembering to use only one large squirt of soap when washing their hands rather than the whole

container. The children follow a healthy lifestyle by participating in regular outdoor activities despite being based in a first floor flat. They visit the park and walk in local woods or go further afield to increase their experiences. The childminder promotes healthy eating, offering regular drinks and varied meals and snacks throughout the day. The menus are based on foods that children like and include both fresh and dried fruits, but vegetables are rarely included to contribute to their good health and help broaden their tastes.

The children have access to a computer and interactive toys to help develop their knowledge of modern technology. They learn to share resources and take turns when playing to develop social skills that will stand them in good stead for the future. The children learn from each other, with older children reading a story to the very young, and toddlers attempting to copy what they see. For example, one successfully joins in a ball game after watching others blow through a drinking straw to move a ball forward along the floor. All celebrate the child's efforts and show pleasure in her achievements to demonstrate the close community feel the setting fosters.

The children receive consistent levels of praise and encouragement to ensure they become enthusiastic learners. They have races to; for example, see who can fill their coloured basket first with bricks of the same colour. The children join in excitedly and are unconcerned whether they come first, second, third or forth, playing fairly for the majority of the time. The childminder skilfully interacts throughout play in order to acknowledge what children do and bring in related topics to help develop an understanding of how different things relate to one another. The result is that the childminder successfully links learning within practical play enabling children to make very good progress while they have fun.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	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	2
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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