

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/09/2009
Inspector	Daphne Prescott
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 was registered in 2003. She lives with her partner and two children in Horsham, West Sussex. The ground floor of the property is the main area used for childminding. A designated sleeping room is provided on the first floor and there are toilet facilities available on both levels of the house. There is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight at any one time, of whom, no more than two may be in the early years age range. The childminder minds with a co-childminder, and together they may care for a maximum of 10 children, with no more than six in the early years age range. Currently they are caring for 30 children between them, 11 of these are in the early years age group and children attend at different times of the week. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She also attends parent and toddler groups. The family have two dogs and four chickens.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides an extremely caring and welcoming environment, where children are well supervised. The highly dedicated childminder is very well informed about children's individual needs through excellent partnerships with parents and as a result, is able to meet children's specific care and developmental needs extremely well. Children access a wonderful child-centred learning environment which provides opportunities for them all to make very good progress in their learning and development. The childminder continuously evaluates her practice, taking on board the views of parents and children, in order to update and enhance the care that she offers. As a result of this, continuous improvement takes place benefiting the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop outside activities to fully promote all areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well protected because the childminder fully understands her role in safeguarding children; she has very good knowledge of the symptoms of child abuse and what action to take if she has any concerns about a child. Adults in the household have been vetted and the childminder ensures she knows who is allowed to collect children, with passwords and photographs in place. All visitors must sign the visitor's log book. Children receive excellent care in a home that is safe and secure because the childminder has a secure understanding of safety issues. She undertakes written risk assessments for the home and outings so that any hazards are identified and minimised. The childminder also conducts a risk assessment prior to children's arrival each day to ensure that the facilities remain suitable for use by the children. Children are able to move freely and independently both indoors and outdoors within the constraints of safety whilst under the close supervision of the childminder at all times. The rooms within the premises are used extremely well, providing ample free play space downstairs and a separate bedroom if children stay overnight.

The childminder has a brilliant working relationship with parents and useful information is exchanged at the start of a placement to ensure the childminder is fully aware of parents' wishes and children's individual needs and capabilities. Parents are provided with excellent quality information about the childminder's provision. For example, the childminder and her co-worker have worked well together to develop a range of comprehensive written policies and procedures to underpin their practice so that parents are fully aware of the service they provide. She also provides much visual information with well organised parents' notice boards and displays, and she is continually on hand to speak with parents. Activity plans are also displayed for the benefit of parents, and the childminder encourages the children and parents to contribute to these. Both childminders maintain all of the required records, which are kept up to date and are very well organised. The childminder has developed strong links with other settings that some children attend and when the need arises, the childminder also works with other agencies to benefit the children in her care, which facilitates continuity in their care and education extremely well.

The childminder has a very positive approach to continual improvement and professional development. She is very pro-active in ensuring that she involves parents and children when identifying strengths and areas for improvements and this contributes to her capacity to maintain continuous improvement. For example, the childminder is currently developing the outdoor play area and has taken into account children's suggestions for a play den at the end of the garden. The childminder utilises regular training opportunities and is in the process of obtaining an early years qualification to update her own skills and knowledge, and holds current first aid and food safety certificates.

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

The childminder creates a lovely, warm and welcoming environment for children, where they are very happy and extremely settled in the childminder's care. Children receive lots of attention and have a strong bond with the childminder which increases their sense of well-being. They regularly approach the childminder for cuddles and she shows a lot of affection towards them offering comforting support and reassurance. A lovely dedicated play room enables children to self select resources and enjoy a wonderful range of activities that capture their interest. In addition, other rooms on the ground floor are set out with different activities which enable the children to have ample space to move around so that they can make independent choices in what they do.

The childminder has successfully used available documentation and her own excellent knowledge of child development to deliver the framework effectively, showing a real commitment to meeting the children's learning and welfare needs. The childminder and her co-worker have very good knowledge of each area of the early learning goals and plan activities together for the children to enjoy. Regular observations of the children are carried out and shared with parents in their 'Observation and Planning' books. These are descriptive, evaluative and linked to the six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder is skilled in supporting individual children's learning and helping them through their learning stages working closely with the parents. For example, the childminder introduced sign language to younger children helping them develop their communication skills. The childminder also uses high levels of interaction with open questioning to support children's language development and through general discussion and enjoyable activities such as sharing favourite books and stories. Children particularly enjoy role play and ample resources, such as dressing up and a play kitchen, are provided to support and extend their imagination. Children act out scenarios as they pretend to cook, and iron dressing up clothes helping to develop future skills. Children develop their understanding of keeping themselves safe through discussions during activities, such as being careful when cooking. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is increasing as they are actively involved in tending the chickens, collecting eggs helping their understanding of where food originates. They are learning about their local community through trips to the park, toddler groups and farms. Children have lots of opportunities to develop their creative skills as there is a wide range of art and craft activities available. Their artwork is displayed making children feel that what they have created is valued.

Equality is promoted by raising children's awareness of different lifestyles through celebrating a variety of festivals. Inclusive practice is also very well promoted so that all children have their welfare and learning needs met and achieve as well as they can. The childminder knows each child's individual needs very well and ensures she gives each one personal, focused time during the busy day to ensure they feel valued and secure. All children are encouraged equally to access the play opportunities on offer, for example, during role play a group of boys organise taking their babies to the shops. Children play both independently and

cooperatively, sharing play resources well. They are encouraged to behave nicely, use good manners and sit at the table for lunch. The childminder is very enthusiastic in her positive praise for all children in her care, boosting their self-confidence and self-esteem as they play and learn. Children take pride in their environment, tidying up and knowing where everything belongs. There are many photographs displayed around the setting which children enjoy looking at. They also bring in photographs of their animals to share with their peers as part of the activity theme and these are displayed prominently.

All children benefit from a clean and hygienic environment. The childminder is a very good role model and encourages them to learn simple hygiene routines, such as appropriate hand washing procedures, from an early age. Children benefit from the childminder's clear knowledge and understanding of healthy eating, receiving a variety of nutritious and healthy snacks and meals each day. These include homemade foods with mostly organic ingredients, such as homemade soup made with fresh vegetables. Children drink freely from individual cups and request more as and when required. All of the children have daily access to physical play activities, both inside, in the garden and within the local community, with the youngest children particularly supported with their emergent physical skills.

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	1
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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