

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	02/11/2009
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).

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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and two sons, aged 16 and 10 years in a two bedroomed semi-detached house in Musbury, near Axminster, Devon. All areas of the home are used for childminding purposes, with a living room and kitchen/dining room used as the main accommodation. Toilet facilities are available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

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 nine children on roll, five of whom are in the early years age range and all attend on a part time basis. The childminder works alongside her husband, who is also a registered childminder. Together they are registered to care for up to six children, all of whom may be in the early years age group. The childminder also cares for children over eight years of age. The childminder is accredited to offer funded nursery education.

The childminder is a member of the East Devon Childminding Network. She has a certificate in Early Years Practice and NVQ Level 3 in Childcare and Education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very happy and excited. They have a positive attitude towards their learning and embrace the wide range of activities that the childminder provides for them. The childminder is enthusiastic, motivated and positive in her interactions with the children. She knows the individual children well, through effective partnerships with parents, so that she can ensure that they are each supported in their learning. This means the children are making good progress in their learning. There is a strong capacity to maintain continuous improvement due to the varied and ongoing training that the childminder attends to develop and improve her practices.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop written observation and assessemnt systems to identify the children's next steps in their learning
- consider organisation of lunch times to further support children's routines and hygiene
- further develop systems for working with other early years settings that children attend to promote consistency and continuity in their care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children play and explore in a safe and secure environment under good levels of supervision. Effective risk assessments of the home, garden and any outings enjoyed means that the childminder is able to identify and address any potential hazards to support the children's safety. 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.

A warm, family home is provided where children are welcomed. Good use has been made of the home and garden to provide children with clear space to play and explore their own ideas. Organisation of the rooms caters for the children's care needs well, providing them with free and independent access to a wide range of suitable play provision and toys to support their interests and learning. The childminder makes good use of her time to ensure that children engage in an interesting range of planned activities, such as making play dough. On occasion though, organisation at some meal times is not effective to ensure that all children sit nicely at the table and eat together.

The childminder is a positive role model and provides children with clear and consistent messages about expectations of behaviour. She teaches them to show care and kindness to others, and to share and take turns in their play. Children learn about difference and diversity through access to a good range of play provision that raises their awareness of the wider world in which they live.

Each parent receives a copy of the childminder's written policies and procedures that outlines the practices she follows when caring for their children. This helps to promote consistency of care and provides children with a sense of belonging and well-being. There are effective systems in place for working closely with parents to ensure that the individual needs of each child and family are met. Daily discussions, use of a daily diary and regular sharing of the children's records of assessments means that parents are kept well informed and able to share and contribute what they know and want for their children. Systems for working with other early years settings that the children attend are not fully effective to enable both parties to share what they know and work together in a consistent approach.

The childminder is committed in her role to provide children with positive and interesting experiences that help them to make good progress in their learning. She has attended a wide and varied range of different training and workshop opportunities to expand and improve her knowledge and skills. For example, she is very clear and aware of her role and responsibility to safeguard the children in her care due to recent training. The childminder attends regular meetings as well as receiving support from her local authority support worker to help her monitor and share good practice. Self-evaluation systems enable her to work with her husband to identify things that are working well and those that can be built on, for example, sensory play and exploration of the garden.

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

Children are very confident and display high levels of self-esteem under the supportive and caring interaction of the childminder who is skilled at allowing the children to have a go and explore their own ideas and creativity.

Two and four-year-old children enjoy and benefit from helping to make play dough, where they measure out and discuss the ingredients they are using, helping each other to tip, pour and stir the mixture. They learn about number use and counting as the childminder talks to them about measures and the numbers on the microwave, identifying how long is needed to cook the dough and how the numbers count down backwards. The children enjoy moulding, shaping and rolling out the dough, using the good range of tools available to them.

Children are learning practices that help them to stay safe and be healthy. They learn to cross the road safely and about stranger danger when on outings. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that children eat healthily and her 'free-flow' approach to outdoors means that children enjoy using the back garden throughout the year, regardless of the weather.

Children enjoy independent access to a range of suitable play provision that supports their interests and imagination. They benefit from the planned activities and opportunities that the childminder provides for them. For example, to support their creativity where they use glitter glue, glitter, leaves collected from the garden and felt-tip pens to draw, make patterns and use their imaginations. They confidently label their own work with their names and show a sense of pride in their creations.

Children's learning is promoted well through planning that identifies a range of activities that are linked to themes and the six areas of learning. Observation and assessment systems record each child's progress in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage steps through all six areas of learning. Photographs and evidence of the children's mark making and creativity support the records. The records show good evidence of the children's learning, although they do not identify key next steps to further support and focus the childminder's attention to enable her to further extend and challenge the children in their learning.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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