

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	20/10/2009
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 1999. She lives with her husband and two daughters, aged 16 and 12 years in a four bedroom semi-detached house in Ottery St Mary, Devon. Downstairs is used as the main accommodation for childminding purposes. This comprises of a living room, kitchen/dining room and downstairs bathroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have two pet rabbits.

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 10 children on roll, one of whom is in the early years age range and all attend on a part time basis. The childminder also cares for children over eight years of age. The childminder holds the Introduction to Childcare Practice.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in this relaxed and comfortable home. Young children receive high levels of support and supervision in their play which means they are confident and happy learners. They respond well to her sensitive and caring approach. The childminder is knowledgeable and skilled through attending regular training and workshops. She uses these skills to not only promote the children's learning well, but to also support and work with parents effectively to promote consistency. There is a high capacity to maintain continuous improvement through the childminder's effective use of self-evaluation and her commitment to making improvements to promote positive outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop records of assessment so that they identify the children's next steps within the Early Years Foundation Stage based on specific key areas that will help to focus planning and extension of the activities offered to further promote children's learning
- introduce systems for working with other early years settings that the children attend to promote consistency and continuity in their care and learning, and for sharing the children's records of assessment with parents so that they can comment and contribute towards their child's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is prioritised. Recent training attended means that there are effective risk assessments and monitoring of the home, garden, outings and regular activities enjoyed, so that children are able to play and explore safely and freely. This is supported by high levels of supervision and instruction from the childminder to further promote the children's safety. The childminder has a secure knowledge of child protection issues and is clear on the correct procedures to follow should she have a concern about a child in her care. These effective measures means that the childminder is able to safeguard children's welfare securely.

The childminder makes good use of her home to provide children with a warm, welcoming family and child-orientated environment where children feel comfortable and at home. They have the freedom to explore in their play with good floor space, comfortable seating and access to a table for meals and messy activities, as well as a quiet area to rest and sleep. There is a wide choice of toys and play provision in place to meet the needs and interests of those children attending. The childminder ensures children access a variety of activities to stimulate and develop their interests.

Children learn to behave well through the positive role model the childminder offers. She uses appropriate strategies for the different ages of children to ensure they understand what is expected of them and why. This helps the children to develop positive friendships and relationships with others. The children have access to a good range of toys and play provision that raises their awareness of difference and diversity. The childminder supports their learning through positive discussions about what the children see to help them learn a positive attitude and acceptance of the world in which they live.

There are effective systems in place for working in partnership with parents. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that individual children's needs are met. Parents receive copies of the childminder's written policies and procedures and sign to show that they understand and agree with the practices the childminder follows when caring for their children. The childminder obtains detailed information from parents about what they know about their child and in return completes a daily diary so that the parents are well informed about routines, achievements and activities enjoyed. Parents are aware of the records of assessment that the childminder keeps for their children, however, these are not yet shared with parents to enable them to comment on and contribute towards their child's learning journey. The childminder has not yet introduced systems to work with other early years settings that the children attend to enable them to work together to promote the children's care and learning consistently.

Self-evaluation systems are highly effectively to support the childminder in achieving high standards and to build on the strong practice already in place. She has used this process extremely well to highlight key areas for her to develop and focus on, to bring about continuous improvements. For example, further training

opportunities, systems to share records of assessment with parents and to link with other early years settings that the children attend. Parents and children are regularly asked to share their views on the service the childminder offers so that she can make any changes to her practices as necessary. The childminder has attended many training opportunities since her last inspection that has secured her skills in areas, such as risk assessment. She meets regularly with other childminders to share good practice and uses the internet to keep her knowledge up-to-date.

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

The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding and knowledge of child development and how she can promote this through the range of activities and regular routines followed. She has a strong awareness of each child and their individual needs. This means she is able to offer high levels of positive interaction and support to promote their development in self-confidence and independence.

The childminder uses her skills well to support young children in their developing communication. For example, she talks to a one-year-old about what they see, hear and do. The child babbles happily, using baby speak in response, to show delight and interest as they watch the rain drops run down the window and listen to the noise it makes against the glass. The childminder extends the 'conversation' by responding to the child's language, confirming she understands what they are saying and pointing out other things of interest in the garden. This means the child is confident in their developing language skills and able to make their needs known by grunting, pointing and babbling so that the childminder opens a door, or has a favourite doll put in the pushchair for them to 'take for a walk'.

Children have a good introduction to being healthy and staying safe. They learn about aspects of their own safety and of the potential hazards around them through support and instructions from the childminder, who raises their awareness of potential dangers, such as hot items in the home and being careful when using doors. This enables the children to make informed decisions about their own actions and the consequences. The childminder has a written healthy eating policy in place that ensures that parents provide healthy food options at meal times. Children follow positive hygiene routines that introduce them to practices that help to reduce the risk of the spread of infection. For example, a one-year-old recognises the need to wash their hands at meal times and indicates to the childminder the need for a wet wipe.

The childminder is calm, gentle and caring in her approach and gives lots of reassurance, cuddles and love to young children. This helps them to move around the home confidently in their play. She allows them the space and opportunity to explore and select their own toys, and engage in a range of activities to promote their learning and independence. For example, a one-year-old is encouraged to feed themselves at lunch time and receives lots of support, praise and encouragement at their attempts.

The childminder bases her planning around the individual needs of each child and their care routines, interests and developmental needs. Regular routines include walks to local places of interest, as well as lots of free play choices, creative activities and music and movement. She uses her secure knowledge of child development and that gained from training to support and promote children's learning. This enables her to provide good levels of support for individual children to ensure that they make progress through all six areas of learning.

The childminder keeps written records of assessment to show the progress children are making. These include written observations and photographs to show the activities the children are engaging in and how they link to the six areas of learning, with next steps for their learning identified, although these are not based on the steps within the Early Years Foundation Stage. These systems do not fully enable the childminder to focus on key areas of the children's learning, to identify key next steps to fully extend and promote the children's learning further.

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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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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