

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	04/01/2010
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 has been registered since November 1993. She lives with her husband and two grown up daughters in a rural setting near Kidlington. Her home is close to local shops, park and village hall. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and a bedroom upstairs is set aside for children to rest or sleep. There is a rear garden for outdoor play. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is also on the TRIO Network.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight years at any one time of whom three may be in the early years age range. The childminder currently looks after five children in the early years age range and one older child who is five years of age. All attend on a part time basis.

The property is located on raised ground off a narrow lane and is accessed via several steps leading up to the front door.

The family has two cats who have controlled access to the children.

The childminder attends a local carer and toddler group for minded children on a regular basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder is extremely attentive in order to ensure children feel safe and thoroughly enjoy their day. She provides exactly the right balance of support and intervention to help children reach their full potential and understand all they see. All aspects of health and safety are well met as are equality and diversity, because the childminder tailors care for children's individual needs and explains things clearly. Ongoing training helps the childminder to stay up-to-date and extend her own skills and consequently, she provides a very professional and effective service. She forms strong relationships with both the children and their carers and has robust policies to ensure standards remain high. Some minor inconsistencies in the detail within the documentation reduce the value of the paperwork slightly.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review self evaluation to improve the consistency of documentation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder routinely updates her knowledge of child protection by attending training at regular intervals to keep abreast of change. She fully understands her responsibility to safeguard children from harm and has local contact numbers separately on file, rather than within her Child Protection policy, to aid a referral if concerns arise. The childminder conducts very effective risk assessments and safety checks in practice but there are occasional omissions in detail on some paperwork. She weighs the children at regular intervals to monitor the ongoing suitability of children's car seats and considers children's changing ability and skills routinely to keep them safe on a day-to-day basis. The childminder is extremely good at settling the children and builds close bonds to ensure they feel safe and welcome. As a result, they are very relaxed in her care and thoroughly enjoy their day.

The childminder observes the effectiveness of all she does and adapts practice as necessary to continue to meet the needs of all individuals. She actively involves each child at their own level, taking account of their individual interests to promote equality and diversity and consequently, all feel special and are developing in confidence.

The childminder has very strong, professional relationships with the parents who use her service, providing daily verbal feedback, clear policies, diary records and occasional newsletters to keep them involved in their children's day. She is developing links with children's other carers and routinely questions pre-school staff to find out what children do when not in her care. This enables her to compliment what children do elsewhere and develop a consistent approach to their development.

Ongoing training and development are considered vital by the childminder in helping her maintain a high quality service. She has begun to develop self evaluation processes in order to identify clear goals and is very keen to seek out answers for things she finds unclear. Her dedication to the children and desire for professionalism result in an unflinching drive for continuous improvement.

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

The children benefit from the childminders thorough understanding of how children develop and learn. They choose what to do and select resources independently from low level storage in order to follow their interests freely. The childminder knows exactly when to intervene and when to hold back. She routinely links learning and provides ongoing conversation to develop children's understanding of what they see. The children talk about the colour of things in the picture when looking at a book, they listen eagerly to follow the story and relate the content to their own experiences. They talk with the childminder about using a bank, and what happens to Mr Greedy when he eats his food. The childminder repeats words

automatically to aid understanding and help develop language skills in the very young. She sits on the floor to play with the children, encouraging them to join in at their own level. The children freely climb onto her lap showing their affection and feel easy in her company. In return, the childminder cuddles the children and strokes them to show they are welcome and help them feel special.

The children play very well together, sharing resources fairly and showing consideration for others. Even the very young join in play, copying what older children do and grinning widely as their efforts are recognised. The children show happiness throughout the day by constantly smiling and chatting about what they do. Some clap to show pleasure in their own success when, for example, they draw a picture or successfully mimic the childminder's movements. Some children chat about the ice cream van bringing an ice cream for the 'lady in the car', happy to share their imaginary game and show off their understanding of the wider world.

The childminder routinely questions the children to encourage thinking and reasoning. She asks a child to say what shape the train track is after they say 'it doesn't look like a circle', automatically developing learning appropriately within children's own games. The children remain interested and well occupied throughout the day and the childminder monitors what they do to ensure they cover all areas of the curriculum evenly. The childminder successfully plans activities around a theme, noting various items to include in order to make full use of all learning opportunities. She observes children's achievements and records their progress against the early learning goals in order to plan for children's next steps and highlight any gaps in development. The childminder sends daily record books home to help all family members feel involved in what their children do but these currently have no links to the curriculum to further inform parents of the value of the activities.

The children experience outdoor play as often as possible, making good use of the garden and local walks to encourage outdoor learning. They grow plants to develop a caring attitude to living things, select and use resources with increasing control, and use equipment for their own purpose to extend their creative play. For example, one uses a plastic hotdog as a telephone to call mummy and chat about his day. The children notice everything around them, rushing to check the door for visitors when they hear a bell, helping collect the post off the mat, and examining paperwork held by a visitor before pressing down the pen to 'assist' in writing. The children are extremely sociable and confident and are becoming enthusiastic learners.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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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