

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY397835
Inspection date	12/02/2010
Inspector	Anne Gunston

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 re-registered in 2009 after moving away from this area where she was a childminder for nine years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is able to care for a total of six children under eight at any one time, of whom three may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for two children in the early years age group and one child in the later years age range on a part-time basis. She lives with her husband and school age son in a house in the North End area of Portsmouth. All of the home is registered although in practice the ground floor is available to children for play and is completely accessible. Toilet facilities are on the ground floor of the home and there is a secure garden available for outdoor play. The family have a variety of pets. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has extremely effective partnerships with parents of children in her care. She is very able to meet the individual needs of each child because she has in-depth knowledge of their unique characteristics. The childminder is completely aware of the value of working closely with anyone involved in a child's life. Children are completely happy, entirely protected and make excellent progress in their learning and development. The childminder is really well organised and her love of children's company is evident. She is motivated and constantly evaluates her practice; she seeks and willingly accepts guidance from professionals involved in childcare. The childminder's focus for the future is completion of additional training because she recognises that this maintains her level of commitment as well as promoting positive outcomes for 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:

- developing a method to involve children in the self-evaluation process to encourage them to express their views and suggestions about the provision.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is skilled at maintaining detailed documentation to support her in keeping children safe. For example, she keeps the daily attendance register in an accessible position in her hall for ease of use; records of medication or accidents are thorough and shared with parents as soon as possible to ensure care given to children is consistent. The childminder makes effective use of her risk assessment

to record changes that may affect the children, such as where the pavements are most treacherous in the ice and snow. The level of detail recorded shows that the childminder takes many precautions to promote children's welfare. She notes when individual boxes of toys are cleaned, such as the stickle bricks or animals, to ensure that none are missed and children always use resources which are in a clean, safe condition. The childminder's supervision of children is constant; she makes sure that she is always within sight or hearing of them. She checks the identity of visitors to her home and keeps records of these individuals. The childminder is keenly aware of her responsibility to safeguard children. She has excellent knowledge of child protection procedures and is confident in implementing these should she have concerns about a child in her care. She shares her policy on this topic with parents to explain her role and reassure them that children's safety and wellbeing is her highest priority.

The childminder is well qualified and very experienced in caring for young children. She has secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and states that she is excited about this framework, believing that it offers an all round approach to providing a bright future for all children. The childminder is working towards becoming a member of an accredited childminding network again, having worked in this way prior to moving house. She aims to provide a high quality service, so finds self-evaluation useful as it allows her time to reflect on every aspect of her provision and act on any weakness, which would otherwise be un-noticed. To date she has altered her planning of activities, making this broader to allow her to change and adapt on a daily basis. This ensures she is able to respond to children's needs and requests, although the childminder does not yet include children's views in her self-evaluation process. The childminder's monitoring methods do help her to identify if changes to her environment, the daily routine or resources are required to ensure they are inclusive for all children. She undertakes training when necessary to enable her to meet an individual's needs, for example, by learning an additional language. The childminder wants to include parents and welcomes their involvement at every stage of their child's development. She completes a daily diary giving parents a detailed account of practical issues, such as meals or sleep times, as well as noting how children enjoyed an activity. The childminder then completes a monthly assessment of each child's progress in each of the six areas of learning; this is an effective system which ensures children develop exceptionally well. She gives these developmental records to parents every month and includes an overview of her assessment. She asks parents to comment on this, seeking their involvement in their child's learning and ensuring continuous progress. She also asks that parents comment on her service and is very happy to act on any reasonable requests for changes that benefit the children. The childminder shows sensitive understanding of the difficulties working parents face, and is clear that it is her role to support and value them as the most important individuals in a child's life. Parents state that the childminder puts them at ease and is prepared to give practical advice but never imposes her opinions. They value the range of activities and new experiences she offers their children and her ability to work in a professional but cheerful and caring way. The childminder is also pro-active in making relationships with others who work to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to minded children. She makes time to speak to key people at children's pre-school and works alongside them in helping children to progress.

The childminder's organisation of her home for the benefit of the children is superb. There are four easily accessed rooms for children's use, including a playroom, which contains an array of resources. These are very well labelled in stacking boxes or on low-level shelving; the room is decorated with children's photographs and colourful posters. Some of these remind children, for example, how important it is to wash hands, show respect and consideration for others or behave in a kind and considerate way. The childminder constantly reviews the display of children's toys to ensure they are accessible for all children and are well used. She makes good use of her resources to enable children of differing age and ability to play together, for example, young children sit in a Bumbo seat to play alongside older ones at an activity table. The childminder makes frequent use of a toy library to add to her resources, particularly when she needs items linking to a theme. For example, when covering the topic of health the childminder borrows a large model of a mouth and toothbrush to develop children's understanding of oral hygiene.

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

Children experience wide ranging, exciting activities while in the childminder's care. They are very comfortable in the home; they hang up their own coats and remove shoes on arrival, familiar with the routine and home surroundings. Children often sing spontaneously as they play, showing how at ease they are. The childminder organises her day around children's needs and makes sure that favourite toys remain where children can use them at will. She is aware that children's play is purposeful and has meaning for them; they often return to continue activities begun the day before. The childminder supports them in whatever activity they choose, resulting in children who have excellent ability to concentrate and stick to a task. Children also have a real sense of fun, particularly during role-play where they confidently tell watching adults that the cat is a girl and not real, it is just 'pretend'. The childminder talks to children a great deal, giving them a wide vocabulary. She acknowledges young children's early attempts at communication and gives prompt attention so they are not discouraged. The activities and resources she provides spike their curiosity. For example, children get to see Triops fish and sea monsters develop in tanks in the kitchen. The childminder is prepared for children's questions about why Triops shed their skin; children are reassured to know that they outgrow their skin and need a new one to be able to grow bigger. The childminder is also prepared for children to be averse to some items, which they may find 'scary'. She gives children the choice, is happy to move these out of sight, and respects children's views.

Children show a great sense of trust in the childminder; they feel immediately secure when waking from a sleep as she cuddles them close and gives them plenty of affection. The childminder takes many precautions to keep children safe and foster this sense of security. For example, she uses an alarm to ensure she is never late collecting children from pre-school or school. She is very aware that children may feel uncertain and alone if she is one of the last to arrive. Within the home children have unrestricted, safe access to toilet and washing facilities; they

are unable to close doors on their fingers and allowed to be as independent as possible. The childminder explains to children why things are dangerous, using language that they are comfortable with. Children practise evacuating the home on a regular basis; the childminder's records help her monitor that every child experiences this at some point. She is aware that some children may find this experience daunting, so helps them overcome their fear by giving them the responsibility of wearing the 'fire officer' badge that day.

Children are developing exceptional understanding of the importance of good diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy well-balanced meals and snacks, often provided by parents, which the childminder serves under hygienic conditions. Her own hygiene practice is exemplary and children already demonstrate excellent understanding of the value of cleanliness to their own health. The childminder provides snacks or meals as and when children need these to maintain their energy levels throughout the day. She influences children's choice, guiding them towards savoury items before sweet. Children learn through activities which ingredients are most healthy for them, such as when they help the childminder prepare vegetables for a casserole. Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise; the childminder has many resources for use in her garden and makes frequent use of local amenities.

The childminder demonstrates excellent understanding of her role to provide children with new experiences, and support and encouragement to make confident choices. She is always prepared to listen to children and consider their feelings; she encourages children to show care for other's feelings also. For example, she expects children to share and take turns. She organises events in larger groups, such as making pizza with other childminders and their children, so children become familiar with her expectations. The childminder also reassures children that it is their right to make a different decision to others, so long as they treat everyone with respect.

The childminder is enabling and prepares children very well for the future. She helps with their transition to school by giving them practical skills and confidence, for example, to dress and undress themselves. She engages children in lively, enjoyable conversations, often using rhymes such as 'cheese makes you sneeze'. This results in children who are very comfortable with using language to communicate and express their feelings. The childminder expects children to try to solve problems for themselves but is ready to intervene and support in a practical way, or by guiding children towards achieving the task themselves.

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

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