

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/05/2010
Inspector	Judith Reed
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 1995. She lives with her husband and their two children, aged over eight, in Basingstoke, Hampshire. The childminder's home is on several levels, however, two levels of the property are mainly used for childminding. Children sleep in a bedroom on a higher level. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She works closely with her husband who is also a registered childminder, as well as two other assistants. She is a member of the local childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are settled and happy in the childminder's home. The childminder knows the children well and is fully aware of their individual needs. Equality and diversity are effectively promoted through toys, books and posters around the childminder's home. The childminder achieves continuous improvement through her ongoing training and thorough self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop observations and recording of children's learning and development to enable further progress
- improve partnership working to help provide the best learning opportunities for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as the childminder is well organised and ensures she has all necessary paperwork in place. The adults living and working in the property have their suitability checked as required. An appropriate safeguarding policy is in place and the childminder ensures parents are fully aware of these guidelines. Children are well supervised and learn how to keep themselves safe on the stairs in this multi-level home. The childminder ensures children are familiar with the house rules, including not running, sitting or playing on the stairs, and she has

stair gates available when needed. Risk assessments are completed around the home, garden and for outings. Partnerships with parents are important to the childminder and she builds good professional relationships with them. She talks to them daily about their children's activities and finds out their views through a questionnaire. The childminder keeps parents informed about her childminding provision through a monthly newsletter. The childminder works in partnership with parents to meet the individual needs of the children. Parents state that they are very happy with the childminding provision and their children are happy also. They appreciate the childminder's patience and understanding. The childminder makes every effort to provide continuity of care and works with parents regarding discipline issues. She helps to prepare children for entering school by taking them to the Songs and Rhymes sessions, which are organised specifically for children who are due to start school this year. The childminder prepares documentation to enable information sharing with the local pre-school. However, she has not yet met with key workers to exchange information and improve outcomes for children.

The childminder promotes equality through providing a number of ethnic toys and books which reflect diversity. The childminder has an equal opportunities policy in place and welcomes all children into her home. She also visits another childminder who cares for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to help children to play together and learn about differences. She is experienced in caring for children from other countries as well as those with English as an additional language. The learning environment helps children to progress as they make choices from a wide selection of toys and activities. The childminder stores equipment around the rooms in large storage boxes, books cases and drawer units. Children also ask for items they cannot see, for example, they request the small table and chairs when they go into the garden.

The childminder completes self-evaluation and keeps her knowledge up to date through training. She has a professional approach to childcare and is committed to improvement. She is currently on the diploma for home carers training course. The childminder makes ongoing improvements to her childminding provision and therefore ensures continuous development. She is a member of the local childminding network and receives regular support visits from the network co-ordinator.

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

Children's learning is effectively supported and the childminder knows them well as individuals. She gives children choices of activities and allows the children to lead the play. The childminder extends the activities to ensure children's learning and development. Children initiate the play which encourages them to be independent. The childminder spends time playing with the children. She makes observations of children's play and has begun to use the observations and assessments to plan their next steps for learning. However, these next steps are not always used to plan future activities. The childminder gathers information regarding children's starting points from parents, and uses this to provide relevant activities. For example, children particularly enjoy outside play and kick a ball around the garden.

The childminder challenges the children to throw the ball into a container. They have a go at throwing the ball and receive praise and encouragement for their efforts. Children's physical skills are developing well and the childminder provides a range of equipment to extend their learning. Children crawl through a tunnel, and clamber inside a tent. They hide in the tent and fasten all the Velcro together to stop the adults looking inside. Children also play with sand in a sand tray. They allow the sand to pour through a flower pot and observe it flying away in the wind. Children's creative development and imagination is encouraged when they dress up in a policeman's helmet and say they are police. They put the hand-cuffs onto the childminder's wrist and tell her that she is their prisoner. They also pretend to be a doctor by wearing a stethoscope and carrying the other medical equipment in a box. They pretend to listen to each other's heart beat with the stethoscope.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe when out and about as the childminder helps them learn about crossing roads and suitable behaviour on the pavement. The childminder encourages children to talk about keeping themselves safe and to learn to manage risk. Children learn to behave in ways that are safe for themselves through practice and habit. For example, they join in regular fire evacuation drills. Children develop a healthy lifestyle through daily physical exercise using the garden or walking to and from school and pre-school. Children understand and adopt healthy habits through signs and routines. For example, children are reminded to wash their hands as necessary and signs in the toilet also tell children when to wash hands and how to remove germs. The childminder keeps parents fully informed about keeping children safe from infection such as pandemic flu and meningitis. She is pro-active in keeping her first aid training up to date. The childminder is very well organised and children's health and welfare are effectively underpinned because required policies, procedures and consents are in place and stored appropriately.

Children are encouraged to share the toys and play together. The childminder is well aware of children's individual needs and encourages the children to play together. They chase each other and hide in the tent together. Children are encouraged to recognise their own unique qualities and the characteristics they share with others and to understand about other children's needs. All children receive a warm welcome and a cheerful farewell. The children support newcomers and help them to settle. They make friendships.

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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