

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/06/2010
Inspector	Louise Bonney
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 registered in 2004. She lives with her two school-aged sons in a house in Alton, Hampshire. The house is within walking distance of the town centre and close to local shops, pre-schools, schools and parks. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than three may be in the early years age range. She has three children currently on roll in the early years age range and six in the older age range, some attending part-time. The childminder provides care from Monday to Sunday throughout the year.

The childminder takes and collects children from local pre-schools and schools and goes to several toddler groups and an early years centre regularly. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and the local childminding network, and has a Level 3 qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder implements the Early Years Foundation Stage well, and provides children with activities that help them make good progress in their learning and development. She continually develops her provision through her thorough self-evaluation, the monitoring of children's progress and by attending additional training. She safeguards the children well through the development of clear procedures, which she shares with parents. She has excellent partnerships with parents, who share clear and detailed information about their children's progress and activities, and the childminder has strong links with other agencies involved with the children. This provides very good continuity in their care and learning and supports their transfer to other settings effectively.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- allow children to move freely between indoor and outdoor environments whenever possible
- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for the use of the outings and trips.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder safeguards children well through her rigorous risk assessment. She reviews her risk assessment record whenever circumstances change, such as while the front garden is being developed, and shares this with parents. She identifies hazards on outings and takes action to reduce these, although she does not include these in her written record to support its review. She develops and shares with parents her records, policies and procedures to protect children's health and safety and which provide good continuity of care. The childminder establishes excellent partnerships with parents. She seeks information from them through the completion of contracts and consent forms. They reflect in their letters how highly they appreciate the childminder and the 'immense support' they receive. She involves them fully in their children's learning and development by sharing her observational assessments of children's progress via daily emails, discussions and through sharing the child's achievement folder. Some parents enthusiastically respond to these updates by contributing their own observations and researching areas where they feel they want to develop their own understanding further. This provides a complete picture of children's progress and allows all parties to continue to build on the children's learning and development exceptionally well. She works closely with others who support the children and shares children's records and other information where appropriate. This ensures children's individual needs are identified and supported well and helps during periods of transition, such as from her care into school or nursery.

The childminder shows strong commitment to continually developing her own knowledge and her provision. She has achieved a Level 3 qualification and is registered to provide support for families referred through the local authority. She seeks feedback from parents, children and the childminding network coordinator when evaluating her provision. She is currently developing her outdoor area to provide a more stimulating environment for the children, to include different materials, such as gravel and grass, a large board for mark making, and a log cabin for role play. While this is being developed children still have access to a decked area for outdoor play.

The childminder manages resources well and reflects on how they are used by the children. This leads to improvements, such as by placing play dough in the sand tray where younger children can choose when to play with it rather than having it on the higher table. She uses recycled materials and has a large box ready to set out with other materials to stimulate children's creative play. She uses her space well to support children's activities, with a corner behind the sofa used as a reading area or den. A long safety barrier is flexibly used to prevent access to the kitchen when cooking, or to divide the lounge and allow older children equal opportunities to pursue activities using resources that are suitable for their stage of development, while keeping younger children safely away from small parts.

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

The childminder shows good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She carefully observes and assesses children's progress using her own and parents' observations, and the Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance. This helps her monitor children's progress closely, although she plans to further develop a system to help quickly identify any gaps in her provision. The childminder uses the children's interests to extend their learning and development. She takes advantage of ad hoc circumstances, such as by visiting a police promotional stand outside the supermarket to extend children's awareness of the roles of others in the community. Although they are not recorded, the childminder identifies clear learning intentions for the children using her observations, and provides activities to support these. This ensures children make good progress in their learning and development. The childminder provides an inclusive setting where children's home backgrounds are taken fully into account. She supports children with English as an additional language by using words and reading stories in their home language. She takes opportunities to explore social diversity, such as when people happily talk to them about their mobility scooters as they walk into town together. This helps children learn to respect differences and similarities.

Children show a good sense of belonging and they feel happy and secure in the childminder's care. They play well together as they make independent choices about activities and share resources. Children are keen to play outside once the doors are opened, but the childminder does not make this area immediately available in order to allow them to more freely develop their ideas and play. Children learn how to play safely as they participate in fire drills and read Fireman Sam stories. They know not to throw toys when tidying up and to take care with each other on the slide. Children have healthy diets and show good understanding of hygiene routines. They each have their own sponge bag provided by the childminder and toddlers ask if they can brush their teeth with their new toothbrush when they wash their hands before snack time, which the childminder happily allows. This helps children develop good hygiene awareness. The childminder provides meals cooked with fresh ingredients which are nutritious, doing some preparation before children arrive to minimise the time spent in the kitchen. Babies enjoy a cuddle while they have their bottle and settle for their routine nap. This ensures children cope well with their busy day by having sufficient food and rest.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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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