

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	10/06/2010
Inspector	Sylvia Shane
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2006. She lives with her husband and one adult child in the Thornhill Park area of Southampton. All areas of the ground floor are used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The local facilities include schools parks and local library.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years, three of whom may be in the early years age group. She is currently caring for three children in the early years age range; these children attend on a full time and part time basis. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Older children also attend and on occasions her husband works as an assistant.

The childminder is an accredited member of the National Childminding Association and also a community childminder.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder is committed to providing an extremely high quality and fully inclusive service. This ensures that all children receive an excellent standard of care and education, tailored to meet their individual learning and development needs. A key strength to aid this is the exceptionally good partnerships with parents and other partners of care and education. As a result, children are very happy and feel safe with the childminder. Effective and on going monitoring of her childminding service ensures that the childminder identifies and addresses areas for development, she demonstrates a clear capacity to sustain ongoing improvement and bring about positive outcomes for children. As a result, children make excellent progress.

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 the process of gathering information from parents to give added focus to the evaluation process

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

A high priority for the childminder is the safeguarding of children. She shows excellent knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and has systems in place to report any concerns. All adults in the household have been suitably vetted. She regularly updates her child protection training and frequently undertakes detailed

risk assessments, identifying and immediately addressing any potential hazards. Thorough daily checks on what she considers could be potential dangers mean that children are cared for in an exceptionally safe environment. For instance, the doors and gates are kept locked. Fridge temperatures are regularly monitored and all equipment is checked and cleaned. This includes the fire safety equipment. The childminder then takes action and logs any repairs or replacements needed.

The childminder shows a clear and consistent dedication and enthusiasm for the work that she does. She clearly demonstrates she has children's best interests at the centre of all that she does. She is committed to driving improvement through her own self-assessment and uses her own and the assessment of the network coordinator to reflect and continuously improve her practice. She is proactive and identifies and sources training to fill gaps in her knowledge. She knows this will improve her practice and therefore bring about positive changes for all children. With this in mind, she consistently thinks how to promote inclusion. For example, she attends training to help her support specific groups of children enabling her to narrow the gaps in children's learning. She reviews and adds to her resources, for example to aid and enhance their communication skills with her, and the other children. She uses visual aids to encourage children to take part in activities such as story times. She ensures all equipment is labelled with picture as well as print, this enables children who have not yet developed verbal or reading skills to access the resources easily and make choices.

She has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and provides a wide range of exciting and inspiring play opportunities and activities to ensure that children make excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development. A key strength is that she is able to adapt these activities to ensure that all children are included at a level that suits their needs. She consistently reviews her resources to ensure they meet the needs of all the children. She encourages children in making some of them, so they have sense of pride. Such as music shakers and books about their exciting outings.

The childminder ensures that parents are consistently kept up to date with information about their child's progress and works extremely closely with them as they jointly share the care of the children. Documented evidence shows she is highly praised by parents for the exceptional care and education she gives to children and the information she shares. Parents are fully included in the care and education of their children and asked to contribute their ideas in regard to the children's next step and individual routines are agreed. Daily diaries are used as an addition to verbal hand over at the end of each day. Excellently evaluated and up to date development records ensure that they are fully aware and kept up to date about their child's welfare and learning. The childminder encourages parents to join her at training events so that they are empowered. The childminder gives out questionnaires and asks them to evaluate her service. She then acts to bring about improvements to her service. The childminder recognises that the questionnaire could be more finely tuned and plans to review this in the near future.

With parental agreement and excellent communication the childminder works in a professional manner with link agencies to ensure that each child gets the support

they need. All records are exceptionally well organised and contribute to the successful care and targeted learning that each child receives, any gap is recognised and narrowed to ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential. The childminder regularly works as a support childminder to share her professional expertise to help enhance or improve the outcomes for children beyond her setting.

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

Children play in a calm, comfortable and vibrant child-oriented environment, where a flexible approach to routine is based on children's individual needs and their stages of development. Children are extremely happy with their childminder. Children demonstrate that they have developed a secure attachment to her and, as a result, they feel exceptionally secure and safe. This is because the childminder knows the children extremely well. She is particularly skilled and sensitive in meeting their needs. She helps children feel safe, through gradually building their confidence, giving them experiences with the right amount of challenge so that they succeed and move forward. She understands that at times they are unsure of strangers so gives plenty of warning about visitors to her home. The childminder takes into account the wishes of the parents and ensures that where ever possible children follow the routines set at home. For example, sleep and feeding patterns. She is careful, to explain to parent's what their children are learning through play and how these link with the Early Years Foundations stages of learning and how they can contribute. The childminder is delighted when the children achieve and gives lots of praise, for example, when very young children start to act out the pictures charades cards she praises them for their good efforts. Their many pieces of art work are appreciated and displayed around the childminders home alongside photographs. This gives children a strong sense of belonging. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the behaviour patterns of young children; this means that she can defuse tantrums rapidly. For example, she first asks them to think about their breathing and then talks to them reassuringly about their strong feelings. She guides and helps them understand how through compromises they can resolve their differences. She ensures that there is sufficient range of equipment for all children to take part and children learn to take turns and share.

The childminder provides a very safe and stimulating environment and children are keen to explore many of the toys and equipment themselves. The childminder picks up on their interests and when children explore and find wood lice and ants under stones in the garden, she encourages them to explore them further by reminding them that there are bug boxes and magnifying glasses to extend this activity. Story times are extremely pleasurable and as a result children are totally engaged and absorbed. The characters are brought to life as the childminder makes good use of man made and real props. Children are encouraged to use their language to describe the colour, size and number of the real fruit provided. In addition, they are encouraged to think about the sequence and recall the story. The childminder makes excellent use of this opportunity to discuss whether the food is healthy and to identify their own favourite fruits, as a result the healthy eating message is re-enforced.

Children are encouraged to be creative and have lots of opportunities to dress up, explore the home corner, hide in tents or explore the play house and act out real and imagined experiences. They sing songs and make and play musical instruments. When playing in the sand they have access to scoops and sieves and wheels and learn about volume as they experiment filling the different size containers. Their imagination is captured and as they make cakes adding and exploring what water does to the texture of the sand. A digging area is allocated and made all the more interesting by the placing of small wooden houses to encourage children to play with the small world toys, such as the dinosaur and farm animals.

Children are learning to develop healthy lifestyles. They learn to be fit and active as they go outside daily and have fun at soft play centres and local parks. Photographs show children negotiating and climbing up the slide and smiling with a sense of achievement. Indoors they dance and ride around on wheeled toys. All this helps to develop their large muscles and improve their coordination. Children are involved in digging and growing the food that they eat, such as beans and tomatoes. Sharing an allotment with other childminders has given them a real sense of community and they learn to care for their environment and about recycling. Healthy eating is further encouraged in numerous ways such as cooking and sampling food. Children learn about dental hygiene as the childminder talks to them about the importance of cleaning their teeth and this is routinely practised after meals so is fully embedded. Children learn about road safety, through routine activities and outings. They become aware of the sound of the smoke alarms going off because the childminder ensures that all children practise how to evacuate her premises at least once a month. The childminder works hard to ensure that children develop the understanding and confidence they need to say 'no' when they feel threatened by strangers or people they know and story books re-enforce this very important message.

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