

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/05/2010
Inspector	Jayne Rooke
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 1999. She lives with her husband and three children aged 15, 13 and 11 years in Dordon, Staffordshire. The whole of the ground floor and one bedroom on the first floor of the premises is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. There are shops and schools within walking distance. Children are taken on a variety of outings and to local childcare and community groups. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. The childminder has two pet canaries.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. There are currently six children on roll, three of whom are in the early years age range. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder has procedures in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and who speak English as an additional language. There is suitable access to the ground floor of the property for people with disabilities; bathroom facilities are available on the first floor. 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 good.

Good arrangements are in place to safeguard children and to support their good health and well-being. Written policies and procedures are comprehensive and essential records are clearly linked to the welfare and learning requirements in most areas. The childminder is developing good systems to identify and plan activities which promote inclusion for children with additional needs. All children are meaningfully and actively engaged in a wide range of stimulating activities which ensures that they make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder forms excellent relationships with parents, carers and other professionals. She uses reflective self-evaluation methods exceptionally well to drive forward her professional practice and skills.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the clarity of the record of risk assessment associated with trips and outings with regard to the use of a vehicle to transport children
- extend activity planning with regard to identifying effective practice for children with additional needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and security is prioritised very well. The childminder is fully aware of all safeguarding procedures and has good systems in place to ensure that children are protected from harm and neglect. She has a clear system in place to record who has legal contact and who has parental responsibility and children's attendance is accurately recorded. All of the necessary documentation is in place and is regularly reviewed to ensure it is up to date, although the risk assessment record lacks clear detail regarding the use of a vehicle to transport children. However, this has minimal impact on children's safety as the childminder vigilantly supervises the children and follows all of the necessary safety guidelines if she takes children out in the car.

The childminder makes excellent use of self-evaluation systems to identify her strengths and areas for improvement. She sets clear goals and actions to drive and secure continued improvement, taking fully into account the views of parents and children's responses to the activities and routines she provides. She attends many professional training courses and has obtained an National Vocational Qualification at Level 3 in childcare and education. This significantly contributes to her professional knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage which she uses to best effect. She has taken positive action to address the recommendation from her last inspection so that parents and carers are fully informed of all policies and procedures, including the complaints procedure.

Children benefit from a warm and welcoming environment which helps them to feel settled, safe and happy in their surroundings because the childminder has a good understanding of equal opportunities issues. She works closely with each child's parent to ensure that children's individual needs are met and that any additional needs are sensitively managed and supported. She fully understands the importance of working closely with other childcare professionals and health agencies in order to enhance the quality of the care she provides. A wide range of resources are attractively set out and easily accessible in the dedicated play room so that all children can make choices in their play. As a result, children confidently select creative materials and games for themselves which helps them to explore and investigate in a variety of ways. Daily routines are well-managed taking into account each child's interests and learning styles.

The childminder's builds exceptionally strong and trusting relationships with parents which is a significant strength of her provision. This contributes extremely well to each child's progress because comprehensive and personalised information is shared about their well-being and their developing knowledge and achievements. This ensures that parents are fully informed of the meaning and purpose of the early years programme and are actively engaged in their child's learning. Their suggestions and comments are valued and respected which ensures continuity of care for each child. Parents have paid many positive tributes to the exemplary care that their children receive. The childminder maintains good links with other childcare professionals for support and to share her knowledge and skills. Although she has not yet had many opportunities to build links with other

carers, she fully understands the importance of effective partnerships so that children receive complementary care.

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

Children make excellent progress and become confident and enthusiastic learners because they are actively engaged in a well-balanced programme of adult-led and child-choice play and take pride in their achievements. The childminder offers many stimulating opportunities for them to explore, investigate and use their creativity and imagination. She builds on what they already know and can do and successfully supports their developing knowledge and skills across all of the areas of learning. During their creative play children are encouraged to recognise the properties of different shapes linked to previously learned themes. They draw circles and lines in the air with their finger which reinforces their learning and knowledge of shape and form and which develops the onset of early writing. Babies enjoy close contact with the childminder who skilfully introduces treasure basket play so that children develop strong sensory awareness from an early age. All children receive individual attention which makes them feel valued and special. Conversations are stimulating and interesting leading to happy chatter about what children like to do and the things that they see and observe. For example, the childminder takes time to draw children's attention to a moth that has flown into the room. She encourages children to be gentle and to look carefully at it's wings and how it moves developing their knowledge of the natural world. Children become thoroughly engrossed in stories and role play. They use story sack resources with much fun and giggles of excitement as they find different characters in a popular bear story and enact the sounds of different animals, mimicking the 'ribbit, ribbit' noise of a frog. Babies and young children are encouraged to look at character cards and to repeat different words whilst the childminder skilfully asks open-style questions. This helps children's to think and find out things for themselves and to understand the meaning of sequence and order. Songs, rhymes and music feature significantly in children's everyday play and activities. They thoroughly enjoy making sounds with the musical instruments and acting out the 'sleeping' and 'snoring' game which prompts spontaneous discussion about their sleep routines and events at home. This effectively supports their developing speech, language and communication skills.

Children are fascinated by photographs and pictures of past and present events. They proudly show and talk about themselves and their 'friends' taking part in a wide variety of activities at the childminder's home and many exciting outings and play events outside. They show a keen interest in using the camera as the childminder takes pictures of their play to share with their family members at home. Children's special pictures are valued and included in their individual progress files. This forges strong bonds between the childminder and each child's family and home life. They develop good knowledge of diverse beliefs and traditions as they celebrate a wide range of cultural and religious festivals throughout the year. The childminder makes good use of research and professional resources to enhance children's learning and knowledge, seeking out information to support children's speech and language and understanding of the wider world.

Children learn how to take turns and behave well because the childminder talks to them positively and kindly. She remains firm and calm as she guides them to alternative games and activities if they become overly robust and unwilling to share. As a result older children demonstrate care and consideration towards each other during their play and routines, developing strong skills for the future. They learn how to play safely around babies, cheerfully talking to them and offering soothing gestures. Children clearly demonstrate that they feel safe whilst they are with the childminder for example, babies are very settled and younger children know that they must wait for the childminder before they use the stairs. Older children draw pictures and written instructions describing the fire drill practice, demonstrating their excellent knowledge of what they have to do and where they have to go to keep themselves and others safe. This contributes significantly to children's safe behaviour.

The childminder is responsive to each child's needs giving them opportunities for active play, rest and relaxation throughout the day. Children follow good personal hygiene routines. They delight in washing their hands after messy play and before meals and snacks, showing good levels of independence. The childminder is stringent about good health and hygiene ensuring that her home is clean and well maintained and that children have nutritious meals and snacks and drink plenty of water. Babies individual feed, sleep and nappy changing routines are well established. Consequently, children are happy and settled and move freely and safely around the home.

Planning, observation and assessment methods are informative and effective, although opportunities to clarify effective practice for children with additional needs in her activity planning are sometimes missed. In all other aspects the childminder clearly identifies areas for continuous provision across each area of learning and sets clear objectives for the next steps. This maximises opportunities to extend children's knowledge and skills.

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	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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	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	2
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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