

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY393000
Inspection date	04/10/2010
Inspector	Catherine Greenwood
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2009. She lives with her husband and their one child aged two years old. They live in a house in Aldershot, Hampshire. The property is close to local schools and amenities, and there is a park nearby. The whole of the property is used for childminding, with toilet and sleep facilities available on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have some fish as pets.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and attends the local childminding groups. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children under eight years, at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. There is currently one child on roll in this age group. The childminder is also registered to provide care under the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register, and there is one child on roll in this age group. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The overall quality of the provision is good. Key strengths of the provision are the childminders ability to interact and communicate with children during their play, and the exceptionally well organized documentation made available to parents. Consequently, children's individual needs are well met. The childminder has a positive approach to extending her own knowledge, and is committed to making improvements. For example, since registration, she regularly discusses good practice issues with another childminder who provides support and advice. In addition, the childminder has enrolled in a website which provides ideas for activities that are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the promotion of children's learning and development. The childminder's ability to reflect on her own practice is good, although some aspects have been overlooked.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase the opportunities for children to use a wide range of media to promote their sensory development
- use observation to identify any gaps in children's learning and plan activities that promote all areas of their development
- make a wider range of resources that promote positive images of diversity easily accessible to children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of child protection procedures. Systems are in place to ensure the childminder and household members are suitable. Comprehensive records of risk assessment are in place, including outings. These are reviewed on a regular basis. A detailed written self-evaluation includes clear aims for improvement, for example, to make observation and assessment records more 'user friendly' for parents by including photographs. The childminder has an accurate understanding of the strengths of the provision, such as her good communication with children. However, some weaknesses have not been identified, such as children's creativity and sensory development, and the accessibility of resources that promote diversity.

The childminder supports children's ability to learn, by working closely with parents to successfully establish routines that meet children's individual needs. Consequently, children are very familiar with what happens each day, and settle quickly. She has a very patient and caring approach, divides her time equally between the children, and actively supports children's interests and what they enjoy doing, by providing resources that capture their enthusiasm. The childminder has a good knowledge of children's individual progress. She consistently engages and communicates with children, and extends their existing abilities, to ensure they have sufficient challenge. However, observations are completed more frequently in some areas, which means there are potential gaps in the promotion of some areas of children's learning.

A good range of resources mean that children are well occupied and independent within their play. The childminder organises the play equipment so that children have lots of variety, for example, by changing them for the afternoon period, and using resources such as African music, and television programmes such as 'Mr Tumble' which includes 'signing' to enhance children's communication. In good weather, children benefit from choosing to play inside or outside.

Partnership is good. The childminder understands the benefits of sharing information about children's individual needs and progress, with parents and other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. She works closely with parents, and supports them with meeting the demands and changes with their own lives that are dictated by their employment. She has a good awareness of changes for families, and says she 'provides children with lots of cuddles and love', for example, when parents are working away from home. Parents are given copies of all written policies and procedures related to the operation of the provision, and daily communication about children's progress is supported through the use of a daily diary. Parents make very positive comments about the provision. For example, they say 'I would recommend the childminders services to friends as I feel she provides a safe and secure environment whilst also making the day an enjoyable and educational experience for the children in her care'.

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

Children make good progress in the learning and development. They are very independent and enjoy making their own decisions. The childminder embraces this area of children's development, through the provision of a well balanced routine, that incorporates free play and planned activities. Planned activities provide children with a good range of activities. For example, they play with bubbles in water, and learn about floating and sinking, and make large scale pumpkin heads. They dress up in costumes related to different months of the year and have their photograph taken for calendars' to give to their parents for Christmas.

Children are very happy and secure, and often approach the childminder for an affectionate cuddle. They show great determination as they attempt to find out how things work, and with the childminders patient support, persist with achieving their aims. For example, as they repeatedly attempt to fasten reins attached to dolls pushchairs. Children are encouraged to share the resources, and overcome any developmental frustrations as the childminder encourages them to take turns. This learning is supported because the childminder is consistent in her approach, ensures that any decisions are fair, and that children are given clear explanations. Sticker charts are used to reward children for good behavior. Regular outings to toddler groups provide children with good opportunities to interact with others, learn to share, and take part in large group activities, such as singing and parachute games.

Children show great interest in looking at books, for example, as they touch and feel different textures of pictures of animals. Planned storytimes during the morning, promote children's learning in this area of development. Children develop a good range of vocabulary as they engage with the childminder and other children. They frequently use recognizable words such as mum, dad, hello, and by bye bye. The childminder makes regular use of resources such as flash cards that encourage all children to name and say objects they see. They make marks as they use chalk and painting resources.

Children solve problems, for example, as they use shape posting boxes, and favorite response toys, such as light responsive planetariums. They learn about color, as the childminder encourages them to find and name balls in the indoor ball pool. They learn to count throughout the day, for example, as they are encouraged to identify the number of cars and trees on outings, and the number of stairs they need to use when going for a sleep. The childminder promotes this area of learning by helping children to fully understand the concept of number, by linking their knowledge of numerals with everyday objects. Planned outings such as swimming, and to soft play facilities, museums, theme parks, the seaside, farms, woodland areas and toddler groups, provide children with a very good range of experiences. They particularly enjoy the different forms of transportation used to get there, such as trains and buses.

Children learn how things work through, for example, through using resources

such as shop tills, and watching the childminder put on a CD for dancing activities. Books and some resources that reflect positive images are available, although these are not made easily accessible at all times to help promote children's knowledge and understanding of diversity. Activities such as planting and growing cress seeds enable children to learn how things grow. Lots of outings to different forests, collecting leaves, flower pressing, and bark rubbings, promote children's understanding of the wider world, and they enjoy feeling the texture of these natural resources. Visits to science facilities in woodland areas, provide children with the opportunity to watch planetarium shows, and play in sensory rooms. The use of these resources enable children to learn about the effects of sound, colour and light.

Children are physically active both indoors and outdoors. They enjoy sitting on a rotating bouncing zebra, and using wheeled toys and a rocking horse. They show good independence and co-ordination as they use them independently during their play, and good self-confidence as they use a slide and small enclosed trampoline in the childminders garden. Children enjoy all physical activities, which the childminder supports by taking them on regular visits to a soft play area, where they use climbing equipment, learn to negotiate space and jump into ball pools. Regular visits to parks and woodland areas provide children with a good variety of outdoor play experiences.

Children play imaginatively as they use resources such dolls and pushchairs. Playdough, paint, cornflour, shaving foam, sand and glue is available. The childminder encourages children to explore these resources, particularly when they are reluctant to 'get messy'. However, limited opportunities for children to access this range of different media, means their creative and sensory development is restricted. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own safety. For example, they learn not to pick up small stones whilst playing in the garden, and quickly remember these expectations. The childminder alerts children to potential dangers, and guides them away from hazards. Children are well supervised at all times, particularly when they are using the upstairs bathroom. The childminder uses a travel cot to ensure children are secure when she is attending to other children's needs, for example, during nappy changing activities. Equipment such as buggies and reins are used on outings, according to children's individual needs and stage of development. In addition, young children are only allowed to run freely in enclosed areas.

Children follow good hygiene practice, for example, as they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating. Separate hand towels and nappy changing mats help to prevent the risk of cross infection. This is promoted through the regular use of hygiene reviews. Children are provided with healthy snacks, and particularly enjoy eating fresh fruit such as grapes and bananas. Packed lunches are provided by parents, and children's individual dietary needs are well known and recorded.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	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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