

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	28/09/2010
Inspector	Debbie Newbury
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged five and four in Staines in Middlesex. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has one cat.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is permitted to care for a maximum of four children under eight years of age at any one time, of whom not more than two may in the early years age range, and of these, not more than one may be under one. She is currently minding three children in the early years age group, whose ages range from 11 months to two years. Days and times of children's attendance vary.

The childminder takes children to local toddler groups, various parks, the garden centre, library, farms, soft play areas and other places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very settled and at ease in a warm, welcoming and inclusive environment. They benefit from many good opportunities for play and learning, both inside and outside the home, and enjoy trusting relationships with the childminder caring for them. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure consistency in children's care. She is self-motivated and demonstrates a very positive attitude to the continued improvement of the service she provides. She successfully identifies most areas requiring development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the risk assessment to ensure it includes the use of safety harnesses and carry out regular evacuation drills with children
- provide parents with opportunities to view and contribute to their child's learning and development record.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are mostly very effective. The childminder is fully aware of the potential indicators of child abuse and the action she must take if she has any concerns. All areas of the home and most equipment used by

children are safe. However, although the childminder reviews her risk assessments regularly, consideration has not been given to whether harnesses need to be available for high chairs. Children benefit from a well organised homely environment where they have space to sit, play and sleep in comfort. The play room is inviting with displays of children's artwork, and a broad range of age appropriate play materials that are arranged to be accessible to children. This helps them become independent and make their own decisions about what they do. The childminder maintains documentation required for the safe management of the setting well.

The childminder is enthusiastic about childminding and fully committed to building further on already good outcomes for children. She has a very positive attitude to ongoing training and is nearing completion of a level three Childcare course. She recognises how she can utilise the increased knowledge this is giving her, to continually improve the service she offers children and families. Recent improvements include the introduction of regular newsletters for parents, which provide them with interesting information about forthcoming activities, any training she has attended and the words of songs she is planning to teach children. The childminder has successfully addressed recommendations made at the last inspection by obtaining information about the local safeguarding board procedures and increasing the range of resources available to promote children's awareness of disability. These measures contribute positively to children's overall safety and mean that they have greater opportunities to understand that people are different from each other.

Parents receive copies of the childminder's written policies and procedures, which ensures they have a clear idea of the way she organises her service. They enjoy a daily informal exchange of information with the childminder, which is supplemented by a comprehensive daily diary which relates to aspects of children's welfare, wellbeing and learning. However, they have not yet had any opportunity to view the development records the childminder maintains on their children, and are therefore unable to contribute their thoughts to these records. In written testimonials provided for the inspection, parents indicate how pleased they are with the care their children receive and the quality of the service the childminder provides. For instance, they comment that their child is provided with a "caring, stable and consistent environment" and that "the childminder is very warm and friendly and interacts with interest and care." Children do not currently receive care or education from any other setting but the childminder understands the importance of working in partnership with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage as necessary, to ensure the integration of care, education and any extended support.

The childminder treats all children in her care with equal concern and respect. She takes account of children's particular interests when providing play materials, which helps them feel valued. Children are presented with a good selection of resources that reflect different aspects of diversity, and they participate in activities that relate to different celebrations and traditions. Thus, they learn about similarities and differences of others.

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

Children benefit from a broad range of different activities and experiences that take place inside and outside the home. These are age appropriate, relate to each area of learning and enable them to develop important skills for their future learning. The childminder sits alongside children and supports their play. She makes sure children's interests are catered for, for instance, by providing toy cars and other items that enable them to explore movement, such as a train and train track. Children's efforts to communicate are acknowledged. The childminder spends a lot of time talking to them and repeats words, which builds their confidence with vocabulary. Numbers and simple counting are an integral part of play and conversation. For instance, when children show interest in playing with the dolls, the childminder suggests they give them a drink and makes a point of counting out three cups for the three dolls the children have. Children sit with her happily to listen to "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and the provision of props, made by the childminder, adds to the interest factor of the story. Children delight in being outside in the garden, whether playing ball, wandering around the garden in search of the childminder's cat, or looking at the flowers and cobwebs. They have a go on the slide and climb up the steps under the careful supervision of the childminder, showing understanding that they need to sit down before they slide down. They enjoy exploring the variety of play materials available which enable them to learn about basic technology, and they show pleasure in their achievements, for example as they produce music when playing with the keyboard, or as the pressing of buttons on electronic toys results in different sounds. They develop their social skills and learn about their local community as they regularly attend toddler groups and go on outings to places of interest. The childminder uses her observations of children to help her assess their progress and plan for the next steps in their learning. This leads to individualised planning, the details of which are emailed to parents on a monthly basis, so they have an idea of what their children will be doing.

Children spend time outdoors every day, which ensures they benefit from fresh air and physical activity. They visit different parks where they can explore the play apparatus available, and they enjoy being outside in the garden. The childminder provides home-cooked meals for children, which often reflect her Italian background. She takes children to visit pick-your-own farms to select vegetables and fruit, which are then used in the preparation of their meals. Children learn to follow good personal hygiene routines from an early age and it is clear from the way they head off towards the bathroom, when the childminder talks to them about the need to wash their hands before they have snack, that this is a part of their normal everyday experience. Children learn how to keep themselves safe with the support of the childminder. She talks about potential hazards, such as the use of the slide and climbing apparatus when they visit the park, which helps them to learn about managing risk. Children learn about road safety as part of their normal everyday routine. However, they do not have many opportunities to practise fire drills as the childminder only undertakes these with children once a year.

Children benefit from the warmth and affection shown to them by a childminder who is kind and caring. They are completely at ease in her company and also enjoy a good relationship with her own children. Children enjoy hugs and cuddles and their confidence and self-esteem is effectively fostered through lots of praise. The childminder understands the important role she has in setting a good example to children and ensuring a positive environment, as a way of promoting good behaviour and consideration for others.

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	1
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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