

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	140815
Inspection date	09/11/2010
Inspector	Sonjia Nicholson
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 has been registered since November 2000. She lives with her husband and four adult children in a house in the residential area of Fairford Leys, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Her home is close to local parks, shops, toddler groups, a pre-school and school. Children have use of the whole of the ground floor including a kitchen/diner, lounge, playroom, toilet and sleep room. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has two dogs.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any time. There are currently seven children on roll, five of whom are within the early years age range. 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 outstanding.

Children thrive in this stimulating setting that clearly recognises their uniqueness and individuality. Each child is supported by the childminder to enable them to take part in activities in a fully inclusive way. Children make extremely good progress during their time with the childminder, for example, they develop their confidence and social skills through many outings and are encouraged to increase their ability to listen through a range of activities including time spent one-to-one with the childminder. The childminder continues to demonstrate an excellent capacity to improve; since her last inspection she has attended a food hygiene course and now implements the guidance given into her daily practice so that food is stored and handled safely. She has plans to complete the Diploma in Home-based Childcare and recognises the benefits of attending another safeguarding course in light of recent high-profile media coverage of child protection cases. The childminder continues to provide the very best possible care and education to children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- clearly showing the impact that high quality practice has on children's care and education in the self-evaluation document.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children stay safe in the childminder's care as she gives high priority to supervising them at all times, for example, restraining them appropriately when travelling in the car and teaching road safety when out walking. She implements a number of well thought-out procedures into her daily practice including conducting a visual risk assessment of the home and garden before children arrive so they do not come to any harm. The childminder also periodically completes a written assessment which clearly identifies hazards and the procedures in place to minimise the risk. Children practise the evacuation drill every month so they know how to leave the home quickly and safely. The drill is on display on the front door with both text and pictures to help even the youngest children understand it. The childminder records details for future reference and as a precaution ensures fire safety equipment, such as smoke alarms and the fire blanket in the kitchen, is checked regularly and remain in working order. The childminder has considered continuity and consistency of care for children in an emergency and has devised an emergency plan involving her buddy childminder who lives close by and is well known to the children.

All adults with access to the children have been deemed suitable and the childminder is very mindful of ensuring children's safety particularly when taking children out. She has an excellent understanding of the safeguarding procedures and demonstrates a clear knowledge of the types and signs of possible abuse. The childminder is confident in her approach to this subject and has completed some online training; however, she is keen to attend a course where she can discuss and debate issues with other childcare colleagues.

The childminder's exceptional organisation impacts on all areas of her work. She maintains a wealth of documentation including a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that are unique to her setting. She provides parents with information about her service and actively seeks their views. They highly value her expert practice and experience. Comments include: 'My child has gone from strength to strength in the past five years. She has learned excellent manners and a respect for her friends. I never hesitate to leave her as the care is extremely flexible and the childminder is happy to help. Varied, fun and educational activities are provided'; 'The childminder communicates well with children and parents and respects children's individual needs. She is very loving and caring with the children. The house is clean, tidy and hygienic with a happy atmosphere and wide range of toys to play with. She is very professional and I would recommend her to anyone'; 'We are pleased with the way we receive feedback at pick-up time. The daily journal is a useful reference point and it allows us to tell the childminder anything of importance'. The childminder ensures parents receive verbal feedback each day and for some children completes a daily diary detailing the care offered. Children's progress is systematically recorded in 'Tracker' books and the childminder encourages parents to be involved in their child's learning and development by asking them to share their observations from home. The childminder has established strong relationships with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers in order to share information so children receive a coherent learning experience.

The childminder's home is very welcoming and highly stimulating with lots of photographs, displays of children's work and posters. She very effectively organises the space and resources available so that children can move and play freely; they have full use of the ground floor including a conservatory which is used as a playroom. It contains a huge array of toys and resources that are attractively arranged in boxes with labels that have both pictures and text so children can make independent choices. They are in excellent condition as the childminder follows good routines to keep them safe and well-maintained and she encourages the children to tidy them away after use. The garden has been divided into two sections to enable children to play away from the childminder's two dogs.

The childminder continually strives to maintain the highest standards within her setting. She works closely with another childminder, meeting each week to discuss practice issues and provide mutual support. Children benefit from the childminder's commitment to improving her service. She constantly evaluates her setting in order to drive her business forward and has completed a self-evaluation form which describes how she meets the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements; however, it does not show how her practice impacts on children's care.

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

Children feel safe within this comfortable family home and are very familiar with the established daily routine. For example, children know they must wash and dry their hands before eating using their own coloured towel to prevent the spread of infection. The childminder provides a range of nutritious fruit snacks which children are involved in choosing; they use a weekly chart with pictures to display their choices. The childminder prefers parents to provide meals but she ensures they are stored appropriately in the refrigerator so they remain fresh. Meals and snacks are taken at the kitchen table where the childminder encourages good manners and social skills. Drinks are available throughout the day so that children do not become thirsty. Children enjoy cooking with the childminder following simple recipes and using a range of kitchen utensils, for example, they make icing to decorate their sponge cakes. The childminder follows excellent hygiene practices throughout the day to ensure infection does not spread. Household tasks are completed prior to children arriving so they enter an extremely clean and tidy home; anti-bacterial spray is used to clean surfaces in the kitchen after use and nappy changes take place with the childminder wearing gloves. Children's behaviour is exemplary as the childminder is highly skilled in promoting good manners and behaviour. She has high expectations and encourages children to develop a respect for one another and to work as a team. Each child has their own behaviour chart with different targets depending on their age and stage of development, for example, she praises a child for good listening and adds a smiley face to their chart. This builds children's confidence and self-esteem. The diversity of each child is valued by the childminder who knows the children in her care very well; she gives utmost priority to ensuring they are well-integrated and achieving as much as they can. She helps them learn about the wider world through

celebrating festivals and events, most recently Diwali where they created firework pictures that are displayed in the kitchen, and through an excellent selection of toys and resources. Visits to the library, toddler groups and daily contact with a school and pre-school help children learn about and feel part of the local community.

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and appear happy and content in her company. The childminder has a calm, loving manner and offers lots of cuddles and praise which makes children feel settled and secure. She has a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and is able to use this knowledge to plan an exciting range of activities and outings that cover all areas of learning; she has also created an information folder to help parents learn more. Children have ample opportunities to go out and about to extend their learning, for example, they develop a knowledge and understanding of the world around them by regularly visiting the childminder's paddock where she keeps several horses and some chickens. This helps them to learn how to care for animals and with their parents consent; some children begin to learn the basic techniques of horse riding. The childminder organises the learning environment to include all children and ensure they are suitably challenged, for example, every Tuesday is 'Reading Night' where the older children read to the younger children and the childminder reads to them all. This encourages children's love of books and also teaches them how to cooperate with one another. Children's language skills are greatly enhanced by the childminder who talks constantly to them. For example, she tells children what is going on and involves them as much as she can, for example, 'We need to change your nappy as it's very full; come and help me find your nappy'. She introduces new vocabulary at every opportunity, for example, while playing with play dough she talks about the 'star' and 'heart' shaped cutters. Children love having familiar stories read to them by the childminder, such as 'The Gruffalo', where they become very animated and play a game trying to recognise the different animal sounds. Children develop and practise their physical skills in many ways; a toddler pushes a buggy around the room, enjoys dancing to music and following instructions to touch their 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. They use a range of tools including their hands to roll, squeeze and poke the play dough. Children use numbers and mathematical language during everyday activities, for example, they count the play food during a pretend picnic and even the youngest of children knows when it has 'all gone!'. Throughout the year children have been involved in planting, nurturing and harvesting vegetables, such as tomatoes, beetroot, onions and runner beans. The childminder makes regular worthwhile observations of what children can do and uses these to plan their next steps in learning on her planning sheet. She uses photographs extensively as effective evidence both in children's records and for displays around the home and each child has an 'Activity Book' which contains examples of their work, for example, handprints, colouring and sticking. As a result of the childminder's input into their learning, they make excellent progress.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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	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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