

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	107797
Inspection date	12/11/2010
Inspector	Ann Guy

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 registered in 1999. She lives with her three children aged 18, 17 and 11 years in Prestwood, Buckinghamshire. The childminder uses the whole house for childminding, with the main play areas on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two guinea pigs, two dogs, a gerbil and five cats as pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of nine children at any one time, as long as she has two assistants working with her. She is currently minding 14 children in the early years age group and 14 children before and after school and during school holidays; of these, five are over the age of eight years. Many of the children attend part-time. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools, and attends several toddler groups on a regular basis. The childminder is registered to care for children in receipt of nursery funding and currently has four of these children on roll. She holds a level four certificate in Early Childhood Education and a BA Hons in Childhood Youth Practice.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this busy, stimulating environment where they have access to an exceptionally large range of equipment and are further stimulated by the excellent adult interaction from the childminder and her assistants. Children's learning and development is extended through the use of excellent discussions with the adults present, who take time to listen and respond to the children's individual needs. A robust system of recording children's achievements is done through observations and photographs, providing a clear picture of every child's development against all areas of learning. Children's safety is paramount and clear procedures and robust risk assessments for every possible situation ensure they are kept as safe as possible at all times. The childminder constantly monitors her provision, ensuring the assistants are following her guidelines and philosophy and adapting practice where necessary to meet the individual needs of every child. She intends to continue doing this to ensure the excellent progress children make is maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to monitor and develop the provision to ensure children have the best possible experiences enabling them to continue making excellent

progress from their individual starting points.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in her care. She ensures all assistants are very aware of their role with regard to safeguarding and child protection and has a robust system in place that shows the procedures to follow if anyone has any concerns. Her risk assessments cover not only the premises but the vehicle in which children are transported and all possible places they visit. This comprehensive document ensures children's safety at all times while in the care of the childminder. Both she and her assistants attend courses throughout the year to ensure their practice is as current as possible.

There is an enormous amount of toys and equipment stored throughout the ground floor of the house, much in labelled boxes and within reach of the children to enable them freedom of choice and the ability to follow their own interests. Occasionally some equipment is made more accessible by being placed on a table, particularly if it has not been used for a while. The equipment enables the childminder to positively promote equality and diversity, with puzzles, books, dressing up equipment and much more reflecting different cultures and disabilities.

The childminder continually monitors the care and education the children receive, ensuring that whichever adult they go to they will receive consistent messages, adapting systems where necessary and making certain all her assistants fully understand the importance of their role. The use of the assistants enables the childminder to have all the ground floor rooms available for the children to play in and they have freedom of movement between each area. She is constantly looking at ways to further improve the care and education offered to the children through the use of self-evaluation and discussions with her assistants and parents.

The childminder has developed a strong professional bond with the parents, taking time to speak to everyone each day. She keeps them fully informed about what their child has been exploring during the day and involves them as much as possible in her provision. She is a local community childminder as well as a network childminder, and works closely with other professionals involved in the life and care of the children, sharing information when appropriate and knowing when to keep things confidential.

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

Children settle quickly and are animated and stimulated by the range of opportunities available within this very child-orientated home. Some activities are suggested by the childminder, especially for the youngest children, but most of the time they have free access to the equipment and choose what they would like to

do. The daily plan enables plenty of room for the children to make decisions about their day and ask for activities that are not readily available.

All the children enjoy exploring with a corn flour and water mix. The older children were extremely animated doing this and talked to the inspector about sausages they were making with the mix. As soon as the children wanted to leave the table and not play with the corn flour anymore, they were taken to wash their hands. The youngest child wanted to get down first and after looking around at all the various options available for him to do, which included a fascinating treasure basket, settled down on a child-size bench and looked at books. After a while the childminder joined the child and read some of the stories to the child. This activity went on for longer than one would normally expect a young child to sit, but the contentment on his face showed how settled and happy he was. Gradually other children came and joined them as they finished playing at the table. Later, one child asked to paint and so the conservatory area was opened up for the children with the assistant monitoring that room and the childminder in the main room

The childminder likes to regularly introduce new experiences to the children and she had purchased some small glitter lights that changed colour. The children were fascinated by the colours and one child asked if they could have a dark den. Immediately cloths were put over the dining table to create a dark area and the children entered with their lights and soft toys. Some amazing interaction followed between the childminder and the children that demonstrated the amazing broad imagination of the children. They were pretending their lights were fireworks and added a few bangs to create a visual picture. The childminder was talking to them from outside the den asking them to describe what they were doing and engaging them in recollection about firework parties they had been to. It is in this way that the childminder develops children's skills, knowledge and understanding through play. She is exceptionally skilled at doing it and effectively demonstrates the art for her assistants to emulate.

Spontaneous observations are noted by all the adults throughout the day; these are then added to the children's file. Each child also has a folder containing photographs of them at play, both at the house and away from it, which are linked to the six areas of learning. Longer observations are completed particularly if the childminder is trying to understand the trigger points for adverse behaviour or unusual behaviour. These give a detailed record that can be analysed and triggers identified to enable the staff to help the child understand their behaviour. The clear termly planning sets goals for every child to achieve under each area of learning and these are interwoven into the choice of activities that are promoted by the childminder on a daily basis. This very child-orientated approach enables every child to develop from their starting point and make extremely good progress across all the areas of learning.

Children's health and well-being is positively promoted through the excellent personal hygiene practices and the clear house rules. They learn, through the excellent example of the adults and their various activities, how to keep themselves safe and to be aware of others. This is supported by a comprehensive set of policies including ones on safeguarding and behaviour management. A monthly menu is prepared which takes into account any special dietary needs and

includes a nutritious hot meal in the evening with a sandwich or light meal at lunch time. Drinks are available for children throughout the day.

Sleeping children use the spare room on the first floor which has a travel cot and monitor in position; an additional travel cot is available if two children need to sleep at the same time. The main play area is the lounge/diner with additional space located in the conservatory and study. The conservatory is primarily used for painting and exploring dried objects like rice and torn paper, while the study is used for a quiet space or space for a small group of children to listen to stories or complete large floor puzzles. Access to the garden is through the conservatory but this area is quite small and so the children are taken out to visit local parks, soft play areas and woods to enable a larger space for physical activities.

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	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

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	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