

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	24/02/2011
Inspector	Ruth Thrasher
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 1989. She lives with her husband in a detached house in the town of Ivybridge in Devon, close to schools, parks and local amenities. All of the house is available for childminding and there is a dedicated play room as well as a large secure garden. She has three cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children in this age group. She also provides care for children aged over five years to 11 years and is registered to provide overnight care for one child. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder has a level 3 early years qualification and has achieved the National Childminding Association Quality First award. She is also a Specialist Childminder and can provide funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children make excellent progress and thrive in the childminder's care because of her clear passion for her work and her strong commitment to giving them the best experience. She is a very experienced child carer and uses this knowledge to work sensitively with parents and other agencies to meet children's individual needs. She reflects on her practice and is always striving to make improvements, such as reviewing the way she completes her observations and assessments to enhance their impact. This demonstrates a very strong capacity to improve and ensures that the needs of all children in her care are very well met.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- simplifying the methods of recording and assessment of children's progress and ways to share this with parents

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe in the childminder's care because she keeps up to date with safeguarding training and guidance and has considerable experience as a foster carer and working with other agencies to protect children. She ensures that family

members complete Criminal Records Bureau checks to protect children. She completes thorough and detailed risk assessments for all types of outings and the premises, which are regularly reviewed, as well as a daily safety check. This ensures children are protected from harm and can play safely under the close supervision of the childminder.

The childminder has completed a detailed self-evaluation and she continuously reflects on her practice and seeks ways to improve, involving parents and the children in this process. For example, she recently purchased a plastic workbench and tools that the children in her care had seen on a visit to the shops and they have played with this constantly, fuelling their imaginations. She has attended a whole range of training courses to develop her practice and continues to identify courses that she feels will enhance her knowledge.

The childminder's house is an ideal environment for children as it is spacious, clean and well equipped with a large garden for outdoor play. Resources are well deployed to support children's learning. They are well organised and accessible to enable children to choose and select and include a range of toys and resources to expand children's understanding of diversity.

Children's individual needs are well met due to the childminder's strong commitment to working in partnership with parents and other agencies. She attends a number of local groups and children's play facilities, has strong links with the local school and pre-school and other childminders in the locality. She works closely with parents to address any development needs or health problems and share their children's progress. For example, 'wow' moments of significant achievements are written on stickers to share with parents.

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

Children have great fun at the childminder's house as she has dedicated most of the house to the children, with plenty of space for activities and dedicated play rooms where they can play safely. The children develop independence as they are able to select their own resources, for example there is a large shed in the garden that is full of toys that the children can choose for outdoor play. The outdoor area is particularly well resourced and the children have plenty of space to run around and develop their physical skills as they learn to throw and catch a plastic disc. The childminder is very aware of the different learning styles of the children in her care, for example the children who love to be outdoors, and ensures the outdoor environment is used to support their learning in all areas.

The childminder uses the children's own interests and starting points to plan activities. She has a weekly timetable of the basic structure of the week, which incorporates pre-school and school collections and many trips and outings to different local groups and activities. She links her observations of what the children can do to the areas of learning. This enables her to plan what they need to do next to help them progress, as well as to self-reflect. She has recently been trialing a

different method of recording this as she wants to ensure her systems are simple and yet effective. She ensures that the activities that she does complement and support what the children are learning in pre-school and other settings.

Children respond extremely well to the childminder's clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour. For example, she uses an egg-timer to show the children how much time there is left to play with the play dough before she clears the kitchen table for snack. They then sit at the table eating healthy snacks such as flapjacks that they have made themselves. They learn about the importance of good hygiene practices as they wash their hands when they come in from the garden and the childminder explains about germs that cannot be seen.

The childminder is highly skilled at developing and supporting child initiated activities to support their learning and ensure they have equal opportunities, for example by asking appropriate open-ended question and providing additional resources and suggesting ideas. One game leads to another, as the boys finish playing with the workbench and start to play with the babies in the buggies, taking them to London, stopping for petrol and comparing the different coloured hair of their dolls.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed well as they learn about their local community and how things work. For example, the snow earlier in the year initiated a discussion of seasons and in the spring they visited a local garden centre to choose a selection of flower seeds, which they then planted in seed trays, developing their fine motor skills as they carefully scooped the compost in plastic cups and poured it into the trays, using their fingers to make holes in the compost. The children then noticed the weather forecast in the newspaper covering the garden table and this initiated a discussion about different types of weather.

Children's communication skills are developing well as the childminder has completed an 'I Can' course to support this and provides excellent resources such as a 'Gruffalo' story sack. Children are developing very good skills for the future as their literacy and numeracy skills are supported by the childminder. For example, the children decide to write 'letters', which they fold and put into envelopes so they can take them to the post box when they go out for a walk.

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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