

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	10/03/2011
Inspector	Angela Cole
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 was registered in 1989. She lives with her husband, adult son and daughter, and her mother visits regularly. They live in a detached house in the Wymans Brook area of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The whole of the downstairs is registered for childminding purposes and there is a fully-enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, including three in the early years age group. She is on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to offer childcare before, during and after school and in school holidays. There are currently three children on roll aged from one to three years on a part-time basis. The childminder also cares for older children.

The house is within easy walking distance of shops and a park. The childminder has the use of a seven-seater people carrier and offers a before- and after-school service for children, collecting from any school in the area. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder promotes some aspects of children's welfare with success, ensuring that their health and well-being is soundly promoted. They are well engaged in most activities, although knowledge of development matters to plan for children's next steps and provision for an extended range of large physical activities are not robust. Children respond well in the warm family atmosphere of the childminder's home, feel safe and enjoy close and caring relationships. Established partnership with parents supports children's welfare and learning. All necessary records are in basically place and are routinely reviewed to promote children's safeguarding. Self-evaluation procedures are developing helping the childminder to begin to identify some priorities to improve practice and children's outcomes.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- use observation and assessment records to identify links with areas of learning in order to plan the next steps of learning for each child
- extend children's access to large physical play to increase opportunities for their independent learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is friendly and welcoming. Appropriate steps are taken to safeguard children as basic policies are broadly implemented and knowledge of child protection issues and procedures to follow for any concern is sound. Written risk assessments are in place with comprehensive detail about the house, garden and outings; these are reviewed as required to reflect any changes. All adults in the household are vetted and the childminder is vigilant so that children are closely supervised at all times.

Children benefit from the spacious, light and airy area in which to play and learn. Indoors, the childminder sets out a range of quality resources, including familiar toys that children have enjoyed while some equipment, including basic craft materials, is in accessible storage. Equality of opportunity and diversity are soundly promoted. Toys, such as puzzles, games and books, show positive images, and relationships with families are firmly established so that each child's needs are met. Communication through discussion and sharing of a diary nurtures working partnerships with parents. As a result, they are regularly informed about their children's progress and able to contribute their views on the children's achievements and learning. The childminder understands the importance of working in partnership with other agencies and/or settings children attend. She has recently gained parents' permission to make contact in order to develop consistency for children's care and learning.

The childminder is enthusiastic and supportive towards the children. While being realistic about her own skills, she is keen to increase her confidence and knowledge of good quality childcare. Her documentation is now clearly organised and, usually, completed promptly. Systems to monitor, review and adjust practice to secure consistency in the quality of outcomes for children are developing. Visits from the local authority, use of improvement plans and regular discussions with parents are helping the childminder to identify her strengths and priorities for improvement. As a result, outcomes for children are suitable and improving.

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

Children make sound progress in each area of their learning. This is because the childminder gains knowledge of their starting points and has a suitable understanding of child development. Children enjoy activities and experiences which help to meet their needs, engage them and encourage the development of their skills for the future. Regular observation and the sharing of information with parents mean that children's progress is satisfactorily assessed, though links with areas of learning are not yet made for each child in order to securely plan for their next steps of learning.

Young children are inquisitive and keen to learn, demonstrating good levels of

concentration and a strong sense of personal achievement when goals are reached. They socialise with others and older children learn to how they can include younger ones in their play. Activities, such as drawing, help children to mark-make in an enjoyable way whilst free-and-easy conversation and accessibility of a wide range of books increases communication skills and introduces new words, such as 'pigeon' and 'pineapple'. Activities, including completing jigsaws and modelling with bricks, promote children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. Regular use of the outdoor environment gives children opportunities to explore the natural world and local environment. They enjoy playing with small equipment in the garden in better weather and help to grow and gather vegetables from the childminder's allotment. Children enjoy imaginative play, for example, with toy vehicles and express their creativity through singing, experimenting with sounds and exploring textures, such as jelly.

The children feel safe in the childminder's care. They seek her out for reassurance and begin to learn how to keep themselves safe. They discuss whether tap water is hot and remember to stop look and listen while crossing roads. They learn about appropriate action to take in emergency situations, such as a fire. Children develop a suitable understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Young children know they must wash their hands and toileting effective hand-washing procedures are implemented. Visits to a park provide them with opportunities to have exercise and use challenging physical equipment. Healthy choices made when accessing drinking water, deciding foods for lunch and harvesting fruits and vegetables, such as tomatoes and beans, contribute to their generally balanced diet.

Children respond well to the clear boundaries that are set. They are well mannered and their behaviour is consistently helpful as the childminder has clear expectations and sets a good example herself. They willingly take on responsibility, for example, sharing and taking turns with younger children. They make some positive choices about their activities as the childminder takes time to listen to their ideas and develop their interests. For example, a child was excited to build with bricks and told the childminder which tower was the taller one.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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