

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/04/2011
Inspector	Dinah Round
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 has been registered since 2010. She lives with her husband, who is her assistant, and two children aged three and six years old. They live in a two bed room property in Castle Cary, Somerset. The childminder is in walking distance of local schools and toddler groups with amenities close by. The whole of the downstairs of the property is used for childminding. Toilet facilities are available on the ground floor. The premises are accessible at street level. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family have one cat.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may provide care for a maximum of four children under eight, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. When working with an assistant, she is registered to care for three children in the early years age group. There are currently three children on roll, all in the early years age group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the friendly and relaxed environment. The childminder has a good understanding of children's individual needs, and overall, provides them with a wide range of fun and interesting play opportunities, which fosters their learning and development. Children's welfare is promoted well; the childminder's regular liaison with parents helps to promote continuity for children's care and well-being. The childminder has a positive attitude to the ongoing development of her practice, and has some systems in place to evaluate her provision and reflect on the care provided for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- incorporate greater opportunities to use counting and number within everyday routines and activities
- extend current systems for exchanging information with parents, to share details of children's progress and get them actively involved in their child's learning
- develop systems of self-evaluation to effectively identify the priorities for development that will improve the outcomes for children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Space is thoughtfully organised so that children can move around safely in their play and freely select resources from the low level units. The broad range of clean, age appropriate toys and resources aid children's enjoyment, and access to some resources reflecting positive images of other cultures help to develop their understanding of diversity. The childminder makes sure that all children feel valued and can join in activities. For example, creative activities are organized on the floor so that each child can easily access their own glue brush and materials. Children benefit from having regular use of the outdoor environment, which makes sure they get plenty of fresh air and exercise. The childminder works together with her assistant to ensure consistency in the care provided for children. She has a positive attitude towards the continuous improvement of her provision, regularly evaluating play and learning opportunities she provides to help identify ways these can be improved to support children's learning further. However, systems to effectively evaluate and highlight all areas for improvement for children are not yet fully developed.

The childminder has established a close working relationship with parents. She organises settling-in sessions to support children's transition from home to her setting to help children feel comfortable in her care. Information is gained about children's normal daily routines, their likes and dislikes and any particular interests, which the childminder uses to provide for their individual needs. Parents receive good information about the childminder's practice, through copies of her policies and procedures, and the regular newsletters 'Oh What A Month,' which shares diary dates, themes and planned activities. Parents are kept suitably informed about their child's care through informal discussions and effective use of a daily diary, although systems to get parents actively involved in their child's learning have not been fully explored. The childminder is aware of the need to link with other early years settings that children attend, to provide continuity for children's care and learning.

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

Children are happy and settled in the warm, welcoming and child-orientated environment provided. The childminder knows the children well and follows their individual routines to make them feel safe and secure. Children benefit from the positive interaction they receive from the childminder; she offers support and encouragement enabling children to make good progress in their learning and development. The childminder balances her attention extremely well to make sure that all children are included in the activities and they are able to work at their own pace. She has a good knowledge of child development and uses ongoing observational assessments of children's achievements to help her plan future play experiences geared to individual children's abilities. This helps children progress and move onto the next step in their learning. Activities are varied and provide fun

learning opportunities, such as a topic around stars that involved children painting stars, creating star shapes in dough and joining in the nursery rhyme 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'.

Children are helped to learn to share and take turns in their play, and the childminder provides a good role model teaching children to have consideration towards the needs of others. For example, the childminder explains gently to children that it is 'unkind to push our friends'. Children's independence is fostered well as they are encouraged to wash and dry their hands by themselves and they all eagerly take a turn in sweeping up all the sparkly bits from the craft activity. Children enjoy listening to music and joining in action rhymes; for example, they have fun marching and playing their instruments to the music tape. The childminder gets actively involved in children's play, asking questions to successfully promote children's communication and thinking skills. Children have access to puzzles, shape sorters and games to help develop their mathematical skills, although opportunities to introduce number and counting within everyday routines and activities are not maximized. Children show good control as they carefully negotiate around the path on the sit and ride trikes outside, and use their fine motor skills to transfer the sand into different containers in the sand pit. All children have good opportunities to use their senses to explore through the varied range of creative activities provided; for example, they enjoy gluing and sticking materials to make their own Mother's Day cards.

Children health and safety is promoted well. They are helped to learn how to keep themselves and others safe through the childminder's gentle reminders, such as not to stand on the sofa but to use the sofa to sit on as it is safer. Children take part in evacuation practises so they gain an understanding of what to do in an emergency situation. Children are familiar with the daily hygiene routines of washing hands before eating and after playing outside. This supports them in adopting good personal hygiene and helps them understand the importance of keeping healthy. Children benefit from the provision of nutritious food, through healthy snacks of fresh fruit and hot cooked lunches. The childminder links closely with parents to ensure that the children's individual dietary requirements are followed.

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	2
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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