

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	30/03/2011
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
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 1998. She lives with her husband and four children, in Broughton Gifford, Melksham, Wiltshire. The whole of the house is included in the registration although mainly the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. She provides care for two children under eight years. She is able to collect children from the local schools. The family has two dogs, horses in an adjacent field, chickens and two cats.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Her registration permits her to care for no more than six children under eight years at any one time, and of these, no more than three may be in the early years age range and of these, not more than 2 may be under 1 year at any one time. She currently cares for eight children in the early years age range, who attend part-time, and no older children. The childminder is a member of the Wiltshire Childminding Network and is an accredited childminder receiving funding to provide free 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 are exceptionally well settled and happy in this caring and stimulating homely environment. The childminder uses her strong knowledge of child development to provide high quality activities that help children make generally excellent progress in all areas of their development. The childminder works highly effectively, overall with others involved in the children's care and as a result she knows each child extremely well and is able to fully provide for their individual needs. She routinely reflects on her practice, taking the views of others into account, and takes action to continually improve what she offers to the 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:

- enhancing the engagement with parents by encouraging them further in contributing to their children's developmental records
- enhancing children's progress in gaining skills for their future lives by encouraging the writing of mainly lower case rather than upper case letters as they first start developing early writing.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is fully conversant with child protection issues and her role in protecting their welfare. She regularly undertakes training to update her knowledge and has a relevant robust policy and procedures in place which she implements most effectively to help protect children's welfare extremely well. She is proactive in ensuring that all those over 16 years living in the house undergo the relevant suitability checks. She carries out thorough risk assessments of her home. She carefully prepares for outings so that children can play adventurously yet safely in her large garden and benefit from exciting visits, such as to a farm. The childminder is highly organised with comprehensive policies to underpin her practice that she follows very well, so children's safety and good health are maintained. As a result of all this excellent practice, children are safeguarded exceedingly well.

The childminder shares policies with parents which keeps them well-informed and helps build trusting relationships. Parents speak very highly of the personal care that their children receive and the warm, caring relationship that the childminder has with their children. They share information and talk about their child's development regularly. However, the childminder does not encourage parents to contribute to children's records whenever possible. The childminder builds very strong links with others involved with the children, such as speech therapists and child development workers. This means she provides outstanding support for their care, learning and development. The childminder is highly effective in seeing that all children achieve as well as they can given their ages and starting points. She closely and accurately monitors their progress and so is able to offer additional early support if needed and to make sure all children are appropriately challenged, including more able children. She adapts activities and buys specialist equipment when needed to ensure all children are fully included. Children play with an extensive range of high quality toys and books and enjoy interesting outings, for example nature walks and to the library, that help them learn to value differences and to understand and contribute to the society in which they live.

The childminder is highly motivated and committed to further improving outcomes for all the children. She prioritises her own professional development by gaining a relevant qualification and attends varied training so that she is well informed about up-to-date practices and ideas. She routinely reflects on her practice and, through discussion and questionnaires, actively seeks the views of parents and children. She focuses on well targeted areas and monitors the impact that changes have made. As a result, outcomes for children improve, so they are exceptionally well cared for and make outstanding progress.

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

Children thrive in this caring and well organised environment. The childminder makes full use of her rigorous assessments of children's development to plan a rich and varied programme of activities and experiences. These are adapted to individual children's needs and interests. This means that children are highly motivated and eager to learn. For example, a group of very young children enthusiastically move their bodies and play bells, whilst the childminder accompanies them on the piano. They then scramble eagerly onto the sofa and snuggle up to the childminder to share a book they have chosen. She is highly skilled at encouraging and developing children's language. She speaks slowly and clearly, introducing new words and extending phrases, in line with children's stage of development. She listens carefully and responds to what children say. As a result, children are eager to share their thoughts and ideas; they quickly become fluent and enjoy talking confidently with peers and adults. Through use in the daily routine, children begin to recognise familiar letters and to make marks and form letters when they are ready, although the use of lower case letters is not always in line with current recommended practice guidance. They especially love 'reading' books that they make with the childminder about themselves. This gives them an excellent base for developing future literacy skills. The childminder recognises that children learn in different ways and encourages active and enjoyable learning, for example, through chalking on the floor outside. Children's learning in all areas is exceptionally well supported by the childminder, who is skilled at directing children's play to encourage them to think and use their knowledge to solve simple problems. Their creativity is developed very well as they explore different musical instruments and use a wide variety of materials.

The childminder plans a good balance between activities that are led by her and those that the children choose themselves. They are encouraged to be physically active and spend considerable time playing and exploring outside. They enjoy this as there is an extensive range of challenging outdoor equipment and enjoyable activities. For example, children thoroughly enjoy bouncing on the trampoline, climbing, playing in the sand pit, feeding the chickens and running round the mown running track. They learn about healthy eating from the youngest age and tuck into bowls of appetisingly presented fresh fruit. They help to grow and tend seeds. They become highly independent in their personal care as they manage their toilet needs, wash hands and dress themselves.

Children behave very well. The childminder is an excellent role model and through sensitive intervention, helps the youngest children cope with feelings of anger and frustration as they learn to share and take turns. Children are kind to each other and show maturity and concern when others are upset. They learn to care for others through every day play and by helping look after the childminder's many pets.

Children are effectively safeguarded, as the childminder fully understands how to assess risks and take action to minimise hazards. Children play safely as they follow sensible house rules, such as not standing on the furniture and waiting until

the slide is clear before going down. They are able to climb on large equipment, which allows them to experience some sense of danger whilst learning to move safely within their limits.

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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