

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	27/06/2011
Inspector	Susan McCourt
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 a registered childminder since 1995. She lives with her husband and four children, two of whom are adults and two of whom are school age. They live in a five bedroomed house in Morden in the London borough of Merton. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder works with a co-childminder who is also a registered childminder. Both childminders have joint responsibility for the childminding practice. The childminder is registered to care for four children under eight if working alone, and a maximum of eight children when working with the co-minder. They are currently caring for a total of ten children between them who attend on a full or part. Children are cared for in the through lounge/dining room on the ground floor. One bedroom on the first floor is used for children's rest, plus there is a toilet and bathroom. Children have access to an enclosed garden area for outdoor play. The childminder regularly visits local toddler groups, drop-in groups and parks with the children, and takes and collects children from a local school. There are two dogs and ten rabbits, and they are appropriately inaccessible to minded children.

The childminder has a level 3 childcare qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides outstanding care for children. She works closely with her co-minder to provide an excellent learning environment and their close attention to detail gives children an exemplary place to grow and flourish with all of their individual needs ably met. The childminder reflects on her practice to make constant enhancements which means that her capacity for continuous improvement is outstanding.

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 self evaluation process by describing the individual contribution of each co-minder.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are exceptionally well safeguarded. All adults undergo suitability checks and the childminder has a robust understanding of her role and responsibilities in child protection, knowing that the welfare of the child is paramount. The risk assessment covers every aspect of the home and activities and is reviewed regularly. Each outing is subject to a rigorous risk assessment, which means that wherever children go, their safety is maximised. The records that underpin children's welfare and well-being are correctly maintained. The childminder attends regular training and stays up to date with best practice and new ideas. She is also very attentive to the children's individual needs and dispositions and continually reflects on how she can enhance her provision to maximise their potential. For example, she worked with her co-minder to organise an open morning for parents at the weekend to create an informal opportunity to meet. This directly increased the amount of feedback she received about children's activities at home, giving greater opportunities to provide cohesive care for children. The childminders work on their self-evaluation as a team, which reflects the seamless way in which they work, but also can neglect the impact that their individual skills bring to the outcomes for children.

The childminder has a huge array of toys and play equipment to suit the abilities and interests of children of all ages, and has arranged them to provide the best possible learning environment in and out of doors. Children can be very independent in their play and sustain their self-chosen activities for lengthy periods. The childminder is alongside the children at all times, being a playful friend and enhancing their learning with her exemplary language and communication skills. The childminder knows the children's families and background cultures very well, and the resources fully reflect the diverse community. The childminder knows each child's disposition and personality and can meet their individual needs very well which addresses any achievement gaps. The childminders work together as lead childminders in the Children's Centre providing activities for drop-in groups. They initiate consistent contact with the schools and other day care settings children attend to promote cohesive and consistent care. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress in an exemplary fashion, with detailed and accurate assessments of their progress, and daily feedback about their day. The childminders produce a newsletter to keep parents informed about forthcoming activities and ways to complement this at home. They also pass on information about best practice such as recent information about how to develop communication skills with children of all ages. This provides children with consistent supportive care which maximises their enjoyment and development. Parents value the childminder's work greatly.

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

The learning environment provides an exemplary range of interesting and enticing activities for children of all ages and abilities. The childminders use the space well to create dens and areas for different types of play. The outdoor space has a book corner and dressing- up- box as well as the more conventional outdoor equipment such as climbing frames and sand pits. The childminders add value to the play by posting labels and questions around the garden. For example, by the vegetable patch children can see "What do plants need to grow?" with pictures of sun, soil and water. All the plants have clear name labels so children can identify different plants and herbs. Similarly, indoors there is a column of pictures from the recent trip to see the fire fighters. Pictures of the children in the cab and wearing the helmets are posted next to key words and pictures of the hose and the engineering, giving children the chance to reflect on their learning. This means that children play in spaces rich in opportunity for all kinds of learning.

The childminder has an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage and makes meaningful observations of children's achievements and their next steps. Each childminder acts as key person to particular children, but their knowledge of all the children is extensive, so while an activity may be aimed at one particular child, all children can benefit because the childminder is skilled at differentiating within an activity to maximise everyone's learning. For example, when making flags to go on the sandcastles children have built, she ensures that the younger ones can choose the stick and the colour of the flag that she makes for them, but more able children are supported to make their own flag. The observations made are supplemented by photographs and referenced to the Foundation Stage so that parents can see exactly what their child has been doing. The childminders also make laminated books of recent trips so that children can share the events with their families.

Children have a great sense of belonging when in the childminders' care. They each have a box for their personal belongings, can see their art work and photographs adorning the walls and because they have exemplary choices, can very much take ownership of what they do. Children keep themselves safe by following the clear rules and guidance from the childminder. She supports children to learn new skills by being close by so that children know they are safe to take risks. Children can also take charge of their personal care in simple and effective ways such as looking in the special table mirror while they wipe their faces after lunch. Photographs of children following the stages of hand washing in the childminder's own bathroom are posted on the wall to remind children what to do. They choose healthy options at snack and meal times and can help prepare the sandwiches and fruit. Water is always available and accessible to children so they can stay hydrated.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They cooperate very well and learn to share, listen to each other and assert their rights gently, knowing they have the support of the nearby childminder over turn-taking for example. The childminder takes time to understand what a child wants when negotiating which car a child wants to

play with for example. Children therefore grow confident, with good self-esteem, and have excellent skills to support them in the transition to school and beyond.

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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