

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/07/2011
Inspector	Jan Leo
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 registered in 2007. She lives with her husband and two school-aged children in a village near Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire. Children use the ground floor of the house for play and a bedroom is available upstairs for them to rest or sleep if necessary. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor activities. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She may accept a maximum of five children under the age of eight years at any one time, of whom two may be in the early years age group. The childminder currently cares for a total of four children who attend on a full- and part-time basis. Of these, two children are in the early years age group and one child is over the age of eight years. The childminder walks to school to take and collect children and makes use of local facilities such as the library and nearby parks.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a very high quality service; tirelessly promoting learning to help children develop the skills they need for the future and reach their full potential. All aspects of health and safety are thoroughly addressed and children feel very safe in the childminder's care. The childminder actively promotes equality and diversity, borrowing some resources to broaden learning experiences and deploying them skilfully to help children progress at a level to suit their individual needs. The childminder forms strong links with children's parents and has excellent organisational skills which help create a very effective and professional service. Liaisons with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage where children attend are continually strengthening to ensure children's individual progression and continuity of their learning and care. Although she already provides a high quality service, the childminder still strives to make improvements, continuing her own development and linking with other childcare professionals to raise standards further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing a system for obtaining information about children's learning and development directly from their other carers to supplement the welfare information already received and used to create a consistent approach to their care.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very secure understanding of child protection issues and the procedure to follow if concerns arise. She attends training at regular intervals to remind her of the process and stay up to date with current requirements. There is a safeguarding policy to inform parents of what to do if they have concerns and the childminder considers safety to be top priority. She conducts daily checks to keep the environment safe as children grow and develop, reviewing her more detailed risk assessments regularly to ensure they remain effective. Children receive a high level of supervision and the childminder reinforces good practice regarding health and safety routinely throughout the day.

The childminder has exceptional knowledge of each child's backgrounds and their needs. She offers suggestions and choices to help children lead the day and feel welcome. As a result, they feel valued and fit in like part of the family. The childminder actively and effectively promotes equality and diversity, tackling any unfair discrimination. She makes excellent use of resources to develop children's varied interests, supporting each child at a level to suit their needs. The childminder is highly effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and that the development of all children in relation to their starting points is very good. She links learning to make it relevant to children's ever changing curiosities and successfully adapts the activities to suit the age and stage of the children who attend. The childminder makes very good use of resource lending services to increase the range of opportunities for children and make sure they have fun. All learning is through play and consequently the children remain stimulated and become enthusiastic learners from an early age.

The childminder monitors the success of all she does and adapts practice when she feels improvements can be made. She links with other childminders to share ideas about good practice and welcomes suggestions from childcare advisors in order to stay up to date and become even more effective. The childminder welcomes input from parents and builds very good systems for sharing information about the day. She provides copies of all policies, creates comprehensive and valuable records of what their children do and displays information clearly and interestingly to ensure it is meaningful and useful. The childminder is proactive in linking with children's other carers, when care is shared, and she regularly exchanges information about children's welfare needs to improve the effectiveness of the care in both settings. She obtains further information from parents regarding learning and development with children's other carers rather than sharing records directly to keep all parties fully informed of aims and progress.

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

The children play happily throughout the day, choosing what to do and where to play. They have free access to resources at low level to develop their own ideas

and the childminder joins in on the floor to link learning and explain how to do things. Together they talk about food as they pretend to make lunch, discussing the colour of different pieces of plastic fruit as they decide what each could be. One child imaginatively suggests a red pepper could be a lump of strawberry jelly while another feels it must be a tomato. They chat freely, expressing their ideas clearly as they impart their knowledge of the world through their own experiences. The children have free access to the outdoor area to develop a healthy lifestyle, choosing independently what to do and where to play. They show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines throughout the day, washing their hands at appropriate times with little prompting. Children clearly understand the conception of healthy eating and choose healthy options at snack and meal times. The childminder's exceptional practice gives children ownership of their health and well-being and allows them to demonstrate that they are well informed about healthy living.

The childminder plans activities to suit the children's interests and stage of development. She considers what children do elsewhere to avoid too much repetition and makes sure that they cover all areas of learning evenly. She routinely brings in related topics when appropriate to help make learning relevant and meaningful and, because of her own enthusiasm, the childminder ensures the children have fun and thoroughly enjoy their day. The childminder keeps planning flexible to let the children lead the day and she successfully suggests new activities when they need a change. For example, the childminder asked if children wanted to paint and one promptly decided to do so outside in a different way from what was intended. The childminder swiftly found the required resources to meet his needs as one child reminded her that aprons are needed before they begin. The children know what is expected and willingly comply to preserve harmony. Someone suggested having bubbles and again the equipment arrived swiftly to begin the activity. The children ran to inform a visitor, eager to share their enthusiasm and excitement. They benefit from different challenges by having a variety of equipment to test their level of ability. One practised trigger control as he sent bubbles flying round the garden while another wafted bubbles out through plastic rings and blew them through a pipe to develop different movements and skills. The children move well and enjoy the open air, taking learning outside at every opportunity.

The children feel safe with the childminder and demonstrate their strong sense of security as they snuggle up to her for a story, choosing their favourite book and finishing the sentences to show that they know what comes next. They gather together enthusiastically to see what colour is inside the paint pots as they take off the lids and count how many colours they have to make their creations. The children play very well together, sharing resources fairly, with a few reminders, and they are beginning to show concern for others. Children behave extremely well as they have an exceptional understanding of the expected standards of behaviour and use these in order to keep themselves and others safe. The childminder keeps children stimulated and active, providing a vast array of learning opportunities and experiences. Children's obvious enjoyment is captured in photographs to inform parents about their busy and exciting day. The childminder includes samples of their work and observation notes to show how activities link to the areas of learning and all records are clearly dated to show children's rate of progress.

Children's next steps are highlighted to aid planning and all records are available to parents to help them continue their children's learning at home if they wish.

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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