

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/07/2011
Inspector	Susan Harvey
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 registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and two teenage children in Didcot, Oxfordshire. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog, a cat and two stick insects as pets. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of six children under 8 years; of whom four may be in the early years age group at any one time. The childminder is currently minding six children in the early years age range; some in part-time places. She also offers care to children over five years. The childminder is also registered to care for a maximum of two children overnight. Local amenities are within walking distance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is qualified and experienced in the care and learning of children. She has attended a range of interesting training events and has addressed her capacity to improve. Resources such as toys and equipment are of a high quality, therefore improving outcomes for children. Children are very settled in the care of the childminder and she is inclusive in her practice. Planning, observations and assessments of children's progress are well documented, although inconsistent planning, regarding simple mathematical thinking and problem solving, does not fully enhance children's learning experiences. Children are developing their independence through everyday activities, but the nurturing of their growing independence is not always fully addressed. There is an excellent two-way flow of information between parents, the childminder and other settings which the children attend, resulting in consistent and productive partnerships that further improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- support children's mathematical understanding further by including problem solving in a wider range of activities and everyday experiences.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder clearly understands her responsibility to safeguard children; she is very aware of the process to follow in the event of a concern about a child. The childminder has attended a course on child protection to update her knowledge of

safeguarding; documents to support any action the childminder may take are readily available. As a result, children are fully protected. Documents informing parents of how to make a complaint, and policies and procedures are clear and easy to read. The childminder provides up-to-date information for parents, such as the regulator's current contact details. Using a comprehensive written risk record and assessment, the childminder identifies areas of risk on and off the premises, covering all things a child might come into contact with, including in the garden and on outings.

There is an extremely good level of communication between parents and the childminder. She believes in working very closely with parents and verbally communicates all that children do. The childminder also has a unique way of providing information to parents which enables them to access their children's progress. She uses a computer programme to inform parents of her daily practice, which is linked to the parent's computer system. To ensure confidentiality, information can only be accessed through the use of their chosen password. The childminder can add information during the day and parents read and comment with further information at their leisure. This enables parents and the childminder to maintain up-to-date information of children's progress and their time in her care. The computer system is also used by the childminder to keep parents informed of the service she provides through regular newsletters, text messaging and email. The childminder's policies and procedures are readily available for all parents to read on the computer and in a well documented file. As a result, parents without access to a computer will continue to be fully informed. Parents are very complimentary about the childminder's service, particularly about the strength of their partnerships together and how much they value the care she gives to the children. Parents also comment that they appreciate the chance to be part of their children's learning through the establishment of the computer system.

The childminder has formally evaluated her practice and has identified her strengths and where she has been successful. She has attended a variety of courses since the last inspection which benefit the children, such as, 'Meeting the Needs of Babies', 'Puppets and Props', and 'The Great Outdoors'. Some of the minded children attend other settings that implement the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the childminder deliberately instigates strong links with the children's key persons. She uses the shared information to assist with the children's individual planning of activities. Relationships are well established, ensuring that each child's needs are met.

The childminder has good knowledge of the children in her care. She promotes diversity well to help children understand the society in which they live. This includes children having easy access to a good range of toys, books and activities centred on cultural festivals, alongside other resources which assist with their learning through play and support all aspects of diversity. Resources and equipment used by the children are of a high quality. The environment is very stimulating and the childminder respects the work that the children have done by carefully displaying their art and craft around the room. They have the opportunity to choose all the resources from various parts of the childminder's home. For example, there is a designated playroom and art and craft area, fully stocked with paints and paper, card and pencils for children to use spontaneously. As a result,

the accommodation is very well suited to the purpose of children learning through play. The outcomes to most of the children's individual learning are clearly linked to the childminder's excellent use of the vast array of resources provided, which fully supports their learning and development.

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

Children feel safe in the care of the childminder and have a strong sense of belonging. They are happy and show good levels of confidence and self-esteem through the childminder's high levels of interaction, encouragement and support. The childminder organises daily routines to help all children become secure and confident. Children enjoy the opportunity to visit places of interest, such as the local farm and library and are kept safe during this time. Children are cared for in a secure environment and the childminder has fully addressed all areas of potential hazards effectively in order to keep children safe. Regular evacuation drills are practised with the children so that they can learn about following instructions in an emergency. As a result, children clearly benefit from the childminder's careful management of their safety.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle. They have several opportunities to use the garden as an extension to their play. This not only enables them to understand the need for regular fresh air and exercise, but gives them chance to make choices for themselves as to where they would like to play. Through the childminder's good example, children are encouraged to adopt high standards of hygiene with little prompting. They are provided with the opportunity to use either a dispenser containing antibacterial gel or to wash their hands at a low sink and dry their hands on individual towels. As a result, children learn to understand about preventing the spread of infection. In many ways children are independent: they access drinking water for themselves from their own water bottle and put on their own shoes and sunhats. Children are well behaved and aware of the childminder's boundaries of behaviour. They are beginning to learn how to share through her gentle persuasion for the need to take turns.

Children make steady progress in their learning and development. The childminder is able to identify their individual learning needs through her experience and knowledge of the development stages of children. She has a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage regulations and requirements in order to help children with their progress and achievements. Photographic evidence supports activities which are well planned and based on observations and assessments, matching the diverse range of children's needs. An example of this is the childminder offers children the opportunity to be creative using large cardboard boxes, which they transform into boats. They compare a picture of a cooling tower on the computer and try to make a model in wet sand. Children also create stories beginning with 'Once upon a time', using felt figures to build a picture of the story on a felt board.

Children use their imagination with role play resources, pretending to be doctors and make each other better. Their progress in communication, language and literacy skills is developing well and their experience of listening to stories and activities assists with their listening skills. When they have the opportunity, children can work out things for themselves, such as comparing what they can do with dry sand and the difference when adding water. On occasions, children experience some activities that encourage them to work out things for themselves, such as comparing what they can do with dry sand and the difference when adding water. However, these activities are infrequent and this impacts on children's ability to independently solve problems and apply mathematical thinking. By taking children on regular visits out of the home, the childminder is adding to their experience of the wider world, helping them to mix and socialise with other children, especially in local group activities and visiting the library to choose reading books. Through activities covering various festivals, the childminder is helping the children to develop a clearer understanding of diversity. They are able to enjoy celebrations such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and St. Patrick's Day.

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	1
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	1

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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