

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/09/2011
Inspector	Aileen Finan
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 registered since 1991. She lives with her husband and two adult sons in a detached house in Wokingham, Berkshire. The house is situated close to local shops and parks. The ground floor only is used for childminding, with a dedicated playroom. The children have access to a large secure rear garden. The childminder currently collects children from local schools and pre-schools. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to provide care for six children under eight years. Of these, three may be in the early years age group. There are currently three children on roll in the early years age group. The childminder is part of the network of childminders for the local area.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder supports the needs of all children exceptionally well overall and they make rapid progress in relation to their starting points. Highly effective partnerships are in place with parents, other providers and agencies and contribute towards meeting the individual needs of the children. Policies and procedures are robust and help to keep children safe and promote their well-being. The childminder's self-evaluation is extremely effective and she demonstrates an excellent capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- making further effective use of outdoor opportunities to extend children's learning and development across all areas of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's procedures for safeguarding children are excellent and a key priority. Risk assessments are particularly thorough and are managed well. These assessments take into account all areas of the environment and any outings children attend. The childminder has an exceptional understanding of her responsibilities to safeguard children and record and report any concerns she may have. The childminder maintains clearly written and robust policies and procedures which help protect children from harm. These are effectively reviewed at various points and are shared with parents.

The childminder's home is highly conducive to children's learning. She provides children with a playroom where they have ample space to play and have fun. Resources and toys are in excellent condition and toys are rotated so children always have a wide variety of play experiences. Children have direct access to the outdoors and can access further resources from carefully planned and labelled storage in the hallway. The childminder efficiently deploys her time so that children's needs are always taken into account and she carefully plans for the individual children attending. As a consequence children thrive and have fun.

Equality and diversity is at the heart of the childminder's practice. She is highly effective in identifying children's achievements and any gaps in their development. Monitoring and evaluation are robust. The childminder has an excellent knowledge of each child's background, their starting points, likes and dislikes, as well as their current interests. As a result, she is able to plan to meet their individual learning needs exceptionally well. The childminder is highly effective in evaluating her practice and takes into account the views and ideas of parents and children. She is clear about the strengths of her setting and how she aims to drive improvement. For example, she has attended many courses to benefit the children and develop her practice. She has already identified further training that she would like to attend. This includes a course in sign language to complement the excellent work and support she already has in place. The childminder is highly organised and committed to planning ahead to meet the needs of any children she may care for.

Partnerships with other professionals and agencies are extremely well established. For example, the childminder completes a summary of children's progress to be handed over to nursery teachers as they leave her care. This provides children with clear continuity of care and learning. Other well-established channels of communication exist with the local authority, other network childminders and other agencies, such as speech and language professionals. There are highly positive relationships in place with parents. Parents are involved in their children's development and learning and are well informed about children's progress and achievements. As a result, there are high levels of engagement that benefit the children. The childminder provides parents with a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, including the learning and development requirements. Parents have a concise and detailed picture of how their children develop and are able to continually support learning at home. This support greatly enhances the outcomes for children.

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

Children are extremely happy, safe and well looked after in the childminder's care. They show high levels of curiosity in their play and make consistent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. This is due to the highly stimulating and welcoming environment and high quality observations and assessments to monitor their progress. There is a balanced approach to child-initiated and adult-led play and activities, which fosters active learning for children.

Children's routines and backgrounds are well understood. All children have a development book, which highlights their starting points and the next steps needed in learning. Children's individual learning plans highlight future planning exceptionally well. These build on children's current interests and new achievements as well as addressing any gaps in their learning. The use of observational assessment is excellent overall and gives a comprehensive account of how each child learns and progresses towards the early learning goals.

The outdoor environment offers a delightful place for children to have plenty of exercise and fresh air. They enjoy various outings, for example, as they go on farm visits, play in the park and hunt for conkers in the woods. They also visit the library and toddler groups. Children delight in riding on the sit-on cars, using the climbing frame and throwing and catching balls in the garden. They have plenty of space to explore and play. However, they are provided with fewer specific learning opportunities in this environment to further extend their learning across all areas. Children have a delightful time with the childminder, who is extremely calm and caring. They happily go to her for cuddles, to snuggle up for a story, invite her to play, or to seek her support. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and learn about how to help keep themselves safe. They regularly take part in fire drills, learn about road safety, visit the fire and police stations and learn about 'stranger danger' at an appropriate level. Children are extremely confident in communicating their thoughts and show mature attitudes to learning about responsibility. They are clearly settled and confident in their surroundings and their behaviour is exemplary.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles exceptionally well from an early age. They talk about foods that are nutritious and those that are not, which enables them to make healthy choices. Even very young children happily raise their hands to have them wiped and cleaned with individual flannels and towels after snacks. The childminder provides very healthy, balanced and nutritious snacks and light meals. Snack and meal times are highly social occasions, which children enjoy. As a result, their social skills, confidence and self-esteem are extremely well promoted.

Children are progressing well with their communication skills. They thoroughly enjoy reading books with the childminder and happily run off to choose their next favourite book. They all cuddle up together to turn the pages and hear the story. Children look through the photo albums, recognising familiar friends and talking about days out. This type of activity helps children to develop excellent recall skills and encourages them to engage in descriptive discussion. The childminder is quick to use such occasions to ask open-ended questions to enable children to think and respond. In all, children have lots of fun, form excellent relationships and build upon many skills to support their future learning and development.

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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