

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	25/10/2011
Inspector	Susan May
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 was registered in 1986. She lives with her husband and adult son in Theale, between Reading and Newbury. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, with sleep facilities on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two cats. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register; the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and may care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. The childminder is currently minding three children in the early years age group and also cares for older children. She is prepared to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder recognises children's unique qualities and promotes their welfare inclusively as they play in a safe, secure and friendly environment. Children are confident, demonstrating very good relationships with the childminder and each other. An excellent range of challenging, age-appropriate toys and activities is available to them to support their development. The childminder works extremely well with parents to meet the needs of the children as she builds positive relationships with them. Good links are made with others involved in the children's care. The childminder demonstrates a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement. She reflects on her practice, with most systems in place for self-evaluation identifying areas for development to benefit the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve further the systems of self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development that will improve the quality of the provision for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises the childminding day well, including parental preferences and children's routines in her planning. Children play happily in the child friendly environment with excellent access to well-maintained toys and

resources. The variety and quality of which provide numerous opportunities for children to reinforce and gain new skills. Children are safeguarded extremely well as the childminder has comprehensive procedures to follow should she have concerns about children in her care. All adults in the household have been vetted and the childminder supervises children at all times to ensure they remain safe. The childminder has carefully detailed risk assessments in place for the premises and outings that identify possible hazards to children and outlines actions taken to reduce these. The childminder records all relevant children's information prior to children being cared for. All information is stored securely and confidentiality strictly observed. Documentation, including policies and procedures, are in place and shared with parents. This helps ensure clear expectations of the childminder's practices.

The childminder offers an inclusive service, taking into account the uniqueness of each child and has superb communication links with parents to meet children's needs. Parents give extremely positive feedback about the childminder's care, stating she supports them as a family, provides stability for the children and offers a warm and comfortable, yet stimulating, environment where children cannot fail to be happy. Parents benefit from verbal feedback, a daily diary and record of children's development to which they are able to add their suggestions and comments. The childminder recognises the importance of sharing children's learning with other persons, for example, with staff at the schools the children attend, in order to provide continuity and consistency in their care and learning. The childminder demonstrates a good commitment to driving improvement as she receives regular information from the local authority and attends further training. She reflects on her practice and recognises her strengths as an experienced childminder. However, while systems for self-evaluation identify most areas for development they do not extend to all areas of her practice to fully benefit the children.

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

Children clearly enjoy their time in the stimulating and secure environment the childminder provides. The childminder has a good understanding of children's development and is confident in enabling children to initiate their own play while being on hand to offer support. She uses their interests to help provide appropriate activities to help them make good progress. For example, children are involved in planning as they help select future activities and resources they would like. Initial information, observations and ongoing dialogue with the parents help provide the childminder with a good understanding of the children's next steps. This helps her to plan appropriate activities that promote children's learning.

Regular opportunities for physical exercise contribute towards children adopting a healthy lifestyle. They go to nearby parks, take walks in the area as they collect children from local schools and explore the natural environment. For example,

children collect leaves and talk about the weather and what they see and do when they are outdoors. Children begin to learn about their bodies as they recognise when they need to rest and when they are hungry and thirsty. Very young children are extremely content and settled because their physical and dietary needs are met to an exceptional standard. Children begin to understand about staying safe as the childminder provides them with simple explanations of the possible consequences of their actions. For example, what may happen if they don't pack some toys away before getting others out to play with. The childminder provides all children's meals and offers healthy and nutritional meals and snacks from which children may choose what they want. Snack and meal times are social occasions as the childminder and children chat, thus providing a sound base for future eating habits. Drinks are always available. Children's pleasure in books is fostered as they happily sit with the childminder, look at books, listen, actively participate in stories and make regular visits to the library. Children use their imagination and thoroughly enjoy role play as they pretend to be wizards putting on hats and cloaks. They complete arts and crafts activities using a range of media and their achievements are displayed promoting self-esteem and a sense of belonging. The childminder respects and values all children and their families and knows them well to ensure that each child's needs are met. Positive images are promoted as all children are encouraged to take part in activities and access resources that support positive images of culture and disabilities. Children have opportunities to mark make as they have access to pens, pencils and use their fingers to make patterns in the sand. The childminder helps develop language skills for children whose language is in the early stages by chatting to them, identifying sounds and objects and pausing appropriately to allow time to respond. Outings to a variety of groups enable children to extend their social skills outside of the home and provide a developing understanding of community and the wider world. Children develop their problem-solving skills as they complete puzzles, build with the magnetic construction and find the correct shape to go in the shape sorter. Children begin to recognise colour and shape in their play as they identify colours, and posters around the home help children begin to recognize numbers.

The childminder is patient and calm and uses praise frequently to help children develop their confidence and self-esteem; children behave exceptionally well, demonstrate good manners and are eager to please. Children begin to show care and concern for each other, for example, as older children help young children with a craft activity. They develop physical skills as they have access to a range of equipment in the garden and regularly visit the park where they can run and explore. Control and coordination is developed as children have access to puzzles, modelling dough and construction toys. A range of interactive toys and electronic games help develop children's future skills and they begin to understand about caring for the environment and sustainability as they know litter must go into a bin and plastic and glass bottles are recycled.

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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	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	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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