

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY345014
Inspection date	02/11/2011
Inspector	Debbie Newbury
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 2006. She lives with her husband and three children aged 12, 10 and five in Blackwater in Hampshire, close to local schools, shops, parks and other community amenities. Minded children have access to the whole of the ground floor of the property. Bathroom facilities are provided in this area and children sleep upstairs as necessary. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a cat and two dogs.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight at any one time, of which not more than three may in the early years age group. There are currently three children in the early years age group and four older children. Days and times of children's attendance vary. The childminder takes children to local childminding and toddler groups, parks, soft play centres and an indoor gymnasium. She undertakes school and pre-school runs as necessary.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children benefit from a safe, settled and stimulating environment in which their individual welfare and learning and development needs are met well overall. They are provided with a range of activities and experiences that take place inside and outside the home. These ensure children make good progress in most areas of learning. The childminder fosters successful partnerships with parents although arrangements for working with other early years settings are not so well developed. The childminder reflects on the service she provides and is well placed to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide a range of objects of various textures and weights in treasure baskets to excite and encourage babies' interests
- maintain a regular two-way flow of information with other settings providing the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure a shared approach to children's care and learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a secure understanding of child protection issues and her responsibility to report any concerns she has. She makes sure her home is safe and secure and applies appropriate safety measures to minimise any potential hazards. These have regard for the ages and developmental stages of the children present and are adapted as necessary. As a result, children are able to move around freely and they display confidence in their environment. Records of risk assessment are in place for the home, garden and the different types of outings children go on. The childminder ensures all necessary documentation meets requirements and she has successfully met all recommendations made at her last inspection. These contribute to improvements in meeting children's individual needs and partnership working with parents.

The childminder has a positive attitude towards childminding and is keen to provide children with a 'home-from-home environment that is stimulating and where they love coming.' She attends additional training whenever possible and reflects on her service by discussing practice issues with other childminders, reading relevant publications and reflecting on her observations on children. Parents and children are also encouraged to express their views. As a result, the childminder identifies her strengths and most areas for further improvement.

The childminder values the uniqueness of each child and she strives to meet their individual needs by working in close partnership with their parents. This means she can ensure continuity of care because she is well informed about their usual routines, interests and likes and dislikes. Arrangements for communicating with parents are effective. They have informal discussions, text one another during the day and the childminder also sends them photographs of their children. In addition, she completes a daily diary which provides parents with useful information about how children spend their time, any care issues and what she has identified as the next steps in their learning.

All children have equal access to the different play materials available, as long as they are suitable for their age and stage of development. Many toys are organised so that children can help themselves and thus, they are encouraged to make their own decisions about what they do. The childminder's practice of rotating toys means that the play provision stays fresh and appealing. Since the last inspection, the childminder has expanded the range of items she offers to promote children's awareness of diversity and difference. They are also supported in learning to value different aspects of their own and other people's lives. The childminder engages them in discussion, answers any questions they have and provides activities that relate to festivals and traditions.

The childminder is aware of the importance of maintaining a two-way flow of information with practitioners from other early years' settings that children attend. However, arrangements to bring this about and thus, ensure a shared approach to their care, learning and development, are not yet sufficiently well developed.

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

Children are clearly settled in the company of the childminder and secure, trusting relationships appear evident. Babies respond with big beaming smiles when she comes back into the room and older children have the confidence to express their wishes. The childminder has a calm, kind manner. She gives gentle support to help children understand acceptable ways to behave and to appreciate one another. For instance, she encourages older children to say goodnight to babies when they go up to bed and intervenes to ask children to return toys. Children's self-esteem is fostered effectively through praise and encouragement.

Overall, children are supported in making good progress towards the early learning goals and gaining skills for future learning. Children benefit from a day that is planned around their normal routines. They usually go out during the morning, attending different childminding groups or visiting other places of interest. Such outings enable children to mix with others to develop their social skills and learn about their local community.

All children enjoy dancing when the childminder puts on a music CD. They laugh delightedly as they move in time to the music in their own individual manner. For instance, they twirl around, rock backwards and forwards and jump up and down. Older children explore creativity by taking part in different art and craft activities. They greatly enjoy exploring play dough and remain fully engrossed in their investigations. However, babies have less opportunity to engage in sensory play; for example, through an investigation of a range of objects of various textures and weights in treasure baskets. The childminder effectively supports children's developing language skills. She engages older children in conversation and acknowledges the efforts of younger children to communicate. She repeats the simple words they say and adds to these, thus extending their language and vocabulary. Children develop their problem-solving skills and awareness of basic technology through their play and exploration of cause and effect toys. By asking questions about numbers and quantity, the childminder builds on their awareness of numeracy and calculation. She uses observational assessment to identify and plan for the next steps in children's learning.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They take part in regular fire drills and learn about road safety. They show understanding of the need to 'listen and look' before they cross roads and the childminder chats to them about the lollipop lady who helps them cross the road when they go to school. Clear and effective procedures minimise the risk of cross infection. Older children wash their hands at appropriate times, explaining that 'germs will make you poorly' whilst younger children have their hands cleaned. They all benefit from daily opportunities for exercise and fresh air. Garden play, walking to and from school, visiting different parks and the local common are normal experiences for children. The childminder has also recently taken children to a forest school session at a local pre-school and plans to continue with this on a regular basis. Such outings provide additional play experiences for children and further extend the learning

opportunities they have when they are with the childminder. Arrangements for the provision of food are agreed with parents on an individual basis.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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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