

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/11/2011
Inspector	Alison Weaver
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 has been registered since 1993. The childminder regularly works with her daughter who is also a registered childminder. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and three other children aged 13, seven and six years. They live in a house in Walton-on-Thames near to shops, schools and parks. The whole of the ground floor and the first floor of the property are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder has one dog, one cat, guinea pigs, a lizard and a hamster.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range when working alone. When working with her co-minder they may care for a maximum of eight children. Currently they are caring for 10 children in the early years age group between them. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder runs a local carer and toddler group for minded children.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder and her co-childminder provide a happy, welcoming environment where children's safety and welfare are successfully promoted. Children have fun with the childminders and enjoy the stimulating activities provided for them. All children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points. Overall, the childminder uses her observation systems effectively to plan and provide activities that support children's learning. Effective links with parents and other providers enable children's individual needs to be well met. Overall, the childminder and her co-childminder take effective steps to monitor and develop their practices in order to continually 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:

- improve the recording of systematic observations and assessments of children's achievements in all areas of learning in order to help plan relevant and motivating play experiences for each child
- develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder regularly updates her safeguarding training, so shows a good knowledge of how to protect a child in her care. She is fully aware of her responsibilities and the need to liaise with the relevant authority in order to safeguard a child's welfare. The childminder has worked closely with her co-childminder to revise her policies and procedures so that they promote the safety of children and the smooth running of their childcare provision. Both childminders do their own risk assessments and take equal responsibility for doing daily safety checks that effectively minimise risks to children. The childminders maintain all other required records together and in a professional manner.

The childminder provides a wide range of safe and suitable resources for children to choose from. These are kept in good condition and are easily accessible to children. The childminder regularly accesses new resources to meet a child's particular interest and needs. Children are supervised well, as the two childminders work effectively together, resulting in children enjoying a lot of individual attention, care and support. Children also benefit from the fact that some choose to play indoors and others outdoors, but still remain well supervised.

The childminder uses contracts and other useful forms with parents of her key children to gain information about a child's individual needs, home background and abilities. She makes good use of this information to help a child settle and to plan suitable activities for them. Parents are kept well informed about their child's welfare and achievements through verbal feedback and effective use of a daily diary. Regular formal reviews of a child's progress are used well with parents to get their input into their child's planning and to encourage them to continue learning at home.

The wishes of parents are respected and any family traditions and beliefs are valued and acknowledged in the setting. The childminder provides an inclusive environment for all children. Where necessary she adapts her home and activities so that every child is able to take part and stays safe. The childminder works in close partnership with other providers and support workers to meet the needs of a child and to help them achieve. All children are helped to understand the society they live in and the importance of respecting differences in others.

The childminder has started to formally evaluate her practices and shows a realistic awareness of her strengths and weaknesses. Her co-childminder is currently undertaking a childcare qualification so they are making good use of the information she gains from her training to improve both of their practices. There is a good exchange of skills and knowledge between the two childminders and both are gaining considerably from each other. This is already resulting in improved documentation shared with parents and more child friendly health and safety displays. However, she has not fully developed a robust ongoing method of reviewing her practices to help her identify areas for development to improve outcomes for children.

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

Children arrive happily at the setting and soon settle in. They show a strong sense of belonging as they make themselves at home in the child friendly environment. Children show they feel very secure as they confidently approach adults. They freely and safely move around the home, making choices from a wide range of suitably challenging activities. Children make good progress in their learning and development as the childminder interacts well with them to promote their learning as they play. She regularly observes her key children to see how well each child is working towards the early learning goals. The childminder then plans and provides other activities that help extend children's learning. However, she does not have a simple ongoing assessment process to enable her to easily identify learning priorities for each child.

Children develop well in the skills they need for their future learning. They play well alongside their friends, as well as independently. They develop good communication skills and become confident speakers. Younger children use sounds and gestures to show what they want and the childminder responds well to them. They form strong emotional bonds with the childminder. They show good levels of self-esteem as they are praised and encouraged by the childminder. Children love to cuddle up with her on the sofa to look at books together. They learn to problem solve and develop good coordination as they build towers with the bricks. Young children investigate their world and work out that an action they take results in a sound or another action.

Children love role play and have fun making meals and pretending to go shopping for food. They enjoy doing different art and craft activities, such as printing with stamps. They call the childminder to come and sit with them. Children enjoy being with her and she gives them her full attention. They have fun together doing movement activities, where they develop their physical skills and move with confidence. The childminder provides a wide variety of sensory activities in her garden that children enjoy. They take an interest in nature as they watch the bee and ant homes, and bird feeders in the garden. Children learn about the wider world as they play with resources that show positive images of diversity and celebrate different festivals.

Children develop healthy lifestyles as they enjoy healthy snacks and meals. They learn where food comes from as they grow produce for their meals in the vegetable patch. They have easy access to drinks so they can see to their own needs. They adopt good personal hygiene routines, particularly when helping to care for the pets. Children enjoy plenty of opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and use the larger play equipment. They also go on outings where they develop a good understanding of how to stay safe. Children also find out about safety issues as they visit a fire station and practise fire evacuation in the home.

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	2
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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