

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	120870
Inspection date	01/12/2011
Inspector	Amanda Tyson
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 1994 and has a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification in Children's Care, Learning and Development. She lives with her husband and three children aged over eight years, in West Horsley, Surrey. The childminder's husband is registered as her assistant and works with her on an occasional basis. The family keep chickens in a pen at the rear of the garden. Childminding mostly takes place on the ground floor of the property, which has toilet facilities. Bedrooms on the first floor are used for sleeping and there is a secure garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group, and of these, no more than one may be under one year. When working with an assistant two of these may be aged under one year at any one time. There are currently six children under eight on roll; of these five are within the early years age group. The childminder takes children to and from local schools and nursery groups and on regular outings within the community.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They benefit greatly from the outstanding variety and quality of play and learning resources in the childminder's home. They are very interested in their play and learning. The childminder's use of the outdoors is a key strength. Activity planning is based on children's interests, but use of observational assessment has yet to be fully developed to show how well children progress over a period of time. The childminder reflects on her practice each day, but has yet to establish a systematic process for reviewing her overall provision. Nonetheless, her commitment to professional development and for implementing new ideas demonstrates strong capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- implement a systematic process of self-evaluation and quality improvement which forms the basis of ongoing review and which assesses against robust and challenging quality criteria
- develop further the use of observational assessments to identify children's next steps and to consistently reflect children's progress over time.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's health and welfare is very well monitored, supported and safeguarded. All records and documentation required for the safe and efficient management of children's care are in place and sufficiently maintained. Risk assessment is rigorous and effective in minimising accidents, and in keeping children safe on outings. The childminder is secure in her knowledge of her regulatory responsibilities, for example in relation to child protection and responding to any complaints. Play and learning resources are of high quality and in plentiful supply. The play room is extremely welcoming and stimulating, and very well used by the children. The childminder plans the day brilliantly to ensure children spend a balance of time with her in the home as well as making use of public and community facilities. Excellent use is made of parks, wide open spaces and her garden to support all areas of learning. Equality and diversity is promoted very well. The childminder is experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The environment and planning provides exceptionally well for children's differing learning styles, for instance boys who prefer to be physically active or outdoors.

Parents say that they cannot speak highly enough of the childminder. They describe her daily exchange of information and levels of support for children with specific health and development needs as 'invaluable'. A daily diary summarises the activities, routines and children's general disposition. However, information about children's progress and development towards the early learning goals is less well shared. Parents are provided with written copies of her policies and procedures to explain her regulatory and operational responsibilities and practice. In the past the childminder has liaised closely with external agencies to support children's individual needs. Although a strong partnership with the other early years settings that children attend has yet to be established, steps are being taken to redress this.

The childminder's knowledge and understanding of child development is very secure and enhanced by a strong commitment to furthering her qualifications and skills through training and independent study. She makes excellent use of local training workshops, such as planning activities to promote maths and writing skills, and for understanding attachment theory. Since the last inspection the childminder has also achieved a Level 3 National Vocational Qualification in Children's, Care, Learning and Development, which strongly influences her practise. However, she has yet to implement a systematic self-evaluation process for identifying future priorities for development and to take her practice to a level of all round excellence. Overall, the childminder's capacity for ongoing improvement is good.

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

Children have a strong, affectionate and trusting relationship with the childminder, who knows and understands their individual needs well. They demonstrate high

levels of creativity and move freely around the childminder's home, enjoying group activities and independent play. Interactions between toddlers are delightful; behaviour is exemplary. The environment, which is full of photographs and displays of children's creative work, fosters an extremely strong sense of belonging in children. They make informed choices about what they want to play and have direct access to everything. Children ask to go to bed when they are tired and arrangements for sleep are discussed and agreed individually with parents. However, underdeveloped systems for identifying children's starting points for learning and for carrying out and using observational assessment mean that children's levels of progress towards the early learning goals are not entirely clear.

The foundations for children to adopt healthy and active lifestyle habits are being very firmly laid. Children wear wet suits and boots in the rain which enables them to experiment in puddles and to discover worms in wet soil. A sand pit enables children to play with large toy diggers and tipper trucks. They pedal with skill and manoeuvre trikes around the house and garden showing a good awareness of space and safety. They practise balancing skills by standing on wobble boards and enjoy using the trampoline. They enjoy collecting the eggs from the childminder's chickens and feeding them fruit scraps. They understand about hand washing and learn about the importance of dental hygiene as they clean the teeth of a crocodile puppet using real toothpaste. Safety rules, such as for crossing roads, are consistently reinforced. Children know that the childminder's mobile number is detailed on the back of the high visibility vests they wear when visiting busy places.

Learning is brought to life through visits to places, such as a butterfly park where they watch butterflies hatching from chrysalis. They learn about transport by visiting the British Transport Museum, go on bus rides and watch the buses going in and out of the garage. Children enjoy making marks with different writing tools, and pictures and patterns with stamps and ink pads. The childminder has an excellent range of toys to encourage information and communication technology skills. Children are learning how to control and programme a floor robot by working out how many squares the robot needs to move along to get to an identified destination. Pre-school aged children have nearly mastered the technique of using two way radios, they use the camera and enjoy looking at mini beasts using a portable microscope which amplifies the images when attached to the computer. Children have fun creating mehndi patterns on their hands to mark the Indian festival of Diwali. Their awareness of diversity is consistently raised as they access resources that depict positive images of ethnicity, gender and disability.

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	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	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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