

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/12/2011
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.

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 was registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and two adult children in a single storey cottage, in the village of Jacobs Well, near Guildford, Surrey. Local parks, shops and schools are within easy distance of the home. Children have access to the whole of the property, but mainly use the playroom and kitchen. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog and a cat.

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 six children under eight at any one time, of which not more than three may be in the early years age range. She may also provide overnight care for two children. There are currently 12 children on roll, five of which are in the early years age range. The childminder is experienced in caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She is an accredited member of an approved childminding network and is able to deliver the early years free entitlement to children over three years of age. The childminder receives support from a mentor from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder creates a calm, caring and homely environment in which children are very happy. They have their individual welfare needs met well and make good progress in their learning and development. Strong partnerships with parents are established whilst those with other providers are mostly effective. The childminder's capacity for sustained improvement and promoting effective outcomes for children is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further arrangements for maintaining a regular two-way flow of information with other early years settings that children may attend to promote greater continuity in children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of safeguarding issues and the action she must take if she has any concerns about a child's welfare. She implements

many positive measures to promote children's safety through the use of relevant safety features and clear boundaries. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed for the home, garden and outings. The childminder organises those areas of her home used for minding effectively to meet the needs of the children attending and ensure it is welcoming. There are different posters displayed alongside photographs of children as well as an 'art gallery' of their masterpieces. These all add interest to the environment and enhance children's sense of belonging. A broad range of appealing play materials that have regard for all areas of learning are easily accessible. Consequently, children make their own choices about what they do and follow their interests.

Children benefit from continuity of care because the childminder works closely with parents to ensure she is well informed about their individual needs. She spends time getting to know children and their families and often does home visits. Handovers are unhurried, which means that both childminder and parents are able to pass on relevant information. The childminder completes link books and regularly sends home children's learning records. Parents are encouraged to contribute to these. Written testimonials available for viewing at the inspection show how pleased parents are with the service the childminder provides. One parent notes how thrilled they are with their child's development and with the support the childminder provides. Another, commenting on their child's learning record, remarks that the childminder 'spends so much time capturing the children's progress with beautifully presented photos and very accurate progress information.'

The childminder understands the importance of working in partnership with other settings that children attend. There are some effective arrangements in place for this. However, this exchange of information does not happen on a regular basis to promote greater continuity in children's learning.

Equality is promoted well. The childminder values each child as an individual and treats everyone with equal concern. Children become aware of the wider world in which we live through discussion and an exploration of resources and activities that reflect different aspects of social diversity.

The childminder's use of self-evaluation is continually evolving. She reflects carefully on all aspects of her service, taking account of the views of parents, children and her childminding network coordinator. She regularly undertakes further training and attends cluster meetings to improve her professional skills and further develop existing practice. Such actions enable her to identify strengths and drive improvement.

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

Children are happy, relaxed and feel safe because they develop close, trusting relationships with the childminder and her family and with the other children present. They separate easily from their parents on arrival and quickly become

involved in their own choice of activity. Children respond positively to the childminder's warm use of praise, which effectively fosters their self-esteem and confidence. She encourages use of good manners at every opportunity and sensitively supports children to share and take turns. This helps children gain clear understanding of desired forms of behaviour.

Children are supported in making good progress in their learning and gaining important skills for the future. There is strong focus on learning through play with many child-led activities. Children remain fully engrossed in these for sustained periods of time. The childminder skilfully facilitates and extends their play and learning through her good use of questioning, which encourages them to think critically and explore ideas. This is especially evident in respect of promoting children's spoken language and problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. For instance, children act out real-life scenarios as they play with the 'babies.' The childminder encourages children to dress the dolls and to consider whether their chosen attire will fit particular dolls and what to do if they won't. Thus, children explore the concept of size in a meaningful but fun way by using resources that they clearly enjoy playing with. Children display their knowledge of safety issues through role-play as they announce that the 'kettle is hot' whilst pretending to make cups of tea. They have lots of fun as they investigate the different sounds they can make with the musical instruments. The piano in the play room is especially popular and they laugh delightedly as they pound the keys. Children learn about their local environment and develop their social skills through everyday activities, such as going to the park, visiting the nearby town to purchase resources for activities and having play dates. The childminder undertakes observations of children. She uses the information gathered to monitor their achievements and plan for the next steps in their learning. Some children's learning records are not fully up-to-date but this is receiving attention.

The childminder implements effective measures to promote good standards of hygiene and minimise the potential for the spread of infection. This helps children stay healthy. They understand the need to wash their hands before eating and they chat with the childminder about the need to wash fruit before it is eaten. The childminder has a flexible approach with regard to the provision of food. She makes sure that any food provided by parents is stored appropriately and that any food she supplies is healthy and nutritious. Children rest according to individual need and their parents' wishes. They benefit from fresh air and exercise, whether playing in the garden or visiting the local park.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe with the childminder's support. For instance, they receive gentle reminders about the importance of not having too many toys out on the floor at the same time. Children regularly take part in fire drills and they explain that 'we have to keep our seat belts on' when they are in the car.

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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