

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/12/2011
Inspector	Tom Radcliffe
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 1994. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Oxford. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age group. She is registered to work with an assistant when the same conditions apply. She is currently minding four children under five during the day at varying times. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She attends a local carer and toddler group which she operates with other local childminders.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in a well organised setting where they can make choices and be independent. The childminder has a good understanding of children's individuality and so meets their learning and welfare needs well. Good working practices ensure that children are protected from harm and that partnerships support the progress that most children make. An informal use of self-evaluation enables the childminder to tackle most weaknesses and set targets for ongoing improvements. She has good capacity to build on what she already has in place and so further enhances outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of written risk assessments to fully record the frequency of safety checks.
- develop a more formal approach to self-evaluation in order to better identify targets for improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder uses concise written policies and procedures to inform users of the service that she provides. This helps the safe and efficient management of the setting which is child-friendly in its outlook. The childminder has a good understanding of effective working practices. She consistently implements them to ensure, for example, that children are properly safeguarded. The childminder

always acts in children's interests and protects them from harm. Children are well supervised and play safely in an environment where the proper use of risk assessment minimises potential hazards. The childminder does not always record when safety checks have been implemented. Children are able to play indoors, outdoors and on regular outings into the locality. This enables children to explore and impacts on their confidence and learning. Children's good health and well-being is promoted consistently well. The childminder uses hygienic daily routines and manages illness and accidents well.

The childminder reflects on her work with children and gains feedback from parents. She observes children carefully to gauge how well they are doing or how they are interacting with others. She uses this information in an informal way to tackle areas that she considers require development. She has an accurate understanding of her own strengths and weaknesses. There have been improvements made since the last inspection and targets set for the future. However, this approach lacks focus and may not highlight all areas that require improvement. The childminder updates her skills through training and works regularly in a network of local childminders. There are well developed partnerships with parents that enable children's needs to be met. In addition, the childminder understands the value of wider partnerships. For example, where children may have special needs and the views of others are important to their development.

Children play in well organised accommodation which provides them with interest. The childminder ensures that children are able to use a large range of resources, toys and activities. This supports children's all round learning and development. Children are able to direct their own play with the childminder facilitating their choices effectively. She remains on hand to offer guidance or suggestions. She times her interventions well which helps children both learn and enjoy what they do. The setting is inclusive as the childminder treats all children as individuals each with the ability to build on what they can do. In addition, children access activities and use resources that help them appreciate their diverse world in an age appropriate way.

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

Children's progress is at the standard expected and often exceeds this. The childminder understands each child's starting points and what motivates them to learn. Her observational assessments are collated and shared with parents. She uses this information to understand children's progress and she fully understands their learning journey towards early learning goals. When planning for future activities the childminder always uses what she knows about children. This enables her to provide children with challenges and the opportunity to extend their skills and competencies. The childminder allows spontaneity and children's interests to guide the activities that they take part in. She has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, the childminder uses her knowledge of how children learn to provide first hand experiences and free play.

Children enjoy making choices and decide to play with role equipment, musical toys or small world resources. This leads to imaginative play as toy babies are taken shopping or on holiday. Children enjoy physical activity and the childminder ensures that drop-in visits provide a good range of outdoor and soft play. Children meet numbers through practical activity, for example, as they count out bricks in a tower. They also experiment with ramps and see how fast balls roll from different heights. The childminder supports child-led play and develops children's spoken language as she asks questions. She also encourages children to express their ideas and talk about what they are doing. Children listen when books are shared and they like to take part in singing. The childminder sets children problems as they play. Children enjoy thinking about the solutions to these as they work out how interlocking shapes fit together. Children try very hard in these situations and are able to fit cogs together so that the toys can move.

The childminder consistently promotes children's welfare. Children are able to learn about their own safety, for example, when on walks to local parks. They also are given guidance so that they are able to consider the safety of others that they play with. They are safeguarded well and behave cooperatively. Children are able to share, take turns and include others in their play experiences. As children direct their own play they show the ability to manage their own behaviour. This helps them understand that harmonious play depends on their own behaviour and attitudes. As children grow they gain a sense of their own individuality and that in some way all children are different. This takes place as children of all ages mix both in the childminder's home and outside it. Children are able to concentrate for appropriate periods of time and use skills that they have to solve problems.

The childminder consistently promotes outcomes for children. Children settle quickly and are very happy to make choices, use their imaginations and join in conversations. They like to explore and show enthusiasm for what they decide to do. Children feel very safe and have a secure and trusting relationship with the childminder. This builds children's self-esteem and provides a firm basis for learning. Children understand about being healthy as they experience eating healthily and enjoy being active. They also learn about personal hygiene and their own part in promoting it. Children respond well to the expectations placed on them as young learners, for example, that they will make choices. Children generally acquire age appropriate skills and abilities. Their progress indicates that most children are well prepared for future learning needs.

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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