

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY320069
Inspection date	01/05/2012
Inspector	Melissa Cox
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 registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and daughter in a flat in Padworth, near Thatcham, Berkshire. The whole of these premises is used for childminding and is accessed via a flight of stairs to the first floor. Children have access to a communal garden. The childminder also minds from her parent's property in Thatcham, Berkshire, where her parents and adult brother live. Within this property, one room is used downstairs and there is a garden area for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age group. She is currently minding two children in the early years range and one older sibling. The childminder has a pet rabbit at her home address and pet dogs at her parent's address.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children's needs are not being adequately met as the childminder does not have a sufficient knowledge or understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. As a result, the childminder is not able to meet the welfare needs of children and they do not make sufficient progress in their learning and development. Furthermore, the childminder is in breach of several legal requirements relating to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare; the suitability of the premises; documentation and the organisation of her practice. Consequently, children's health, welfare and safety are at risk. Links with parents and others supporting children's care and education are not strong enough to ensure that children's individual needs are met. Additionally, the childminder does not take adequate steps to provide suitable ventilation at the premises or to protect children from animals; nor does she provide children with sufficient opportunities to learn about diversity. Self-evaluation has failed to identify most of the significant issues that affect the care of children and the childminder's practice; therefore, the childminder does not demonstrate a suitable capacity to make ongoing improvements.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

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| • provide the following information for parents: details for contacting Ofsted and an explanation they can make a complaint to Ofsted should they wish (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) | 29/05/2012 |
| • carry out a full risk assessment for each type of outing (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) | 29/05/2012 |
| • conduct a risk assessment, review it regularly and identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis. Maintain a record of these particular aspects and when and by whom they have been checked (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) | 29/05/2012 |
| • plan and organise systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs (Organisation) | 29/05/2012 |
| • undertake sensitive observational assessment and use it to plan and provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals (Organisation) | 29/05/2012 |
| • keep a daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (Documentation) (also applies to both parts of the Childcare Register) | 29/05/2012 |
| • keep a record of the risk assessment clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident. (Documentation) | 29/05/2012 |

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- undertake regular self-evaluation to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children
- develop partnerships with other providers and external agencies to identify children's learning and developmental needs and to provide the best learning opportunities for each child
- provide opportunities for children to begin to know about other people's cultures in order to understand and celebrate the diverse society in which they live
- make sure that there is adequate ventilation to protect the children from the effects of cigarette smoke
- make sure that any animals on the premises are safe to be in the proximity of children and do not pose a health risk.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding children are inadequate as the childminder is not meeting a number of the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements. The childminder is aware of her role and responsibilities with regard to child protection and has an updated policy in place which she shares with parents. However, other procedures for safeguarding children are inadequate. Although the childminder has a basic safety checklist in place, the daily visual checks that she completes are not robust enough to fully identify more serious hazards in order to minimise the risk to children. Furthermore, risk assessment documents are not specific enough for the two properties that the childminder minds from. This means that some hazards to children, such as the use of the communal garden located near a busy road or children's safe access to pets, has not been accurately identified. In addition, the childminder has failed to maintain a record of risk assessment for either property and has not effectively reviewed her safety practices after an incident or accident has occurred. Moreover, the childminder is unaware of the need to risk assess local outings that she undertakes with the children, such as walks to nursery school. As a result, children's ongoing safety is compromised. Some written information to support children's welfare and care needs are in place, such as details about dietary needs and family contact arrangements. However, information is not well maintained and is not suitably updated. This makes it difficult to find information that is specific to each child; for example, individual emergency medical permissions or matching written records to each child attending. Documentation, such as public liability insurance, has not been updated correctly to reflect that the childminder provides care from two separate properties. This renders the policy invalid across both properties and compromises children's care. However, the childminder does meet the legal requirement to carry public liability insurance for the property detailed on her registration certificate at the time of inspection. The childminder keeps a tally of the overall hours children attend in her daily diary, but has failed to keep an accurate account of the times of attendance and the names of the children who attended. The childminder has not provided parents with up-to-date information regarding the complaints procedure. This means that parents are not informed of the correct procedures to follow in the event that they wish to raise a concern. These are all breaches of specific legal requirements and put children's health, safety and welfare at risk.

The way in which the childminder promotes equality and diversity is inadequate. An overall lack of assessment and planning limits the childminder's effectiveness in identifying children's differing abilities, in order to provide challenging experiences to narrow the achievement gap. Children have a basic range of activities and play materials available to play with during the day, and within this selection there is a limited range to support children's awareness of other cultures, diversity or gender. While toys are of a mostly suitable quality, they are not presented in a way that supports children to make choices in their play. This is because toys are kept in boxes in a bedroom, making it difficult for younger children to access them. Within the selection on offer, some of the resources are not suitable for the younger children who attend, and as a result, do not meet children's overall individual and developmental needs.

Partnership with parents is poor. The childminder exchanges basic verbal information, about some of the children's care needs with parents at drop off and pick up time. For example, they discuss children's sleep times. However, the lack of good quality information exchanges with parents means that the childminder is not effective in meeting children's learning and developmental needs. Furthermore, she does not provide parents with the opportunity to support or make decisions about their child's learning, well-being or development. The childminder does not take sufficient account of parents' or children's views to influence and improve her practice, although she does provide a flexible service to support parents while they are working. Partnerships with providers of other settings that children attend have not been established and as a result there is little continuity between settings to promote children's achievement and well-being.

Self-evaluation procedures are ineffective. The childminder does not have an accurate appraisal of her service and has not effectively identified key areas that are in urgent need of improvement. The childminder demonstrates a limited capacity to maintain future continuous improvements. For example, although she has developed a system to record children's progress in her setting, she has yet to implement this to support children's learning. She has identified some training needs and is currently working through an assessment towards a recognised qualification in childcare. However, there is currently no effective system in place for the childminder to reflect upon or to evaluate her practice, independently of this assessment. This lack of robust self-evaluation procedures contribute to the childminder's failure to meet a number of statutory requirements which relate to safeguarding the children in her care.

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

Children are not being helped to learn and develop effectively. This is because the childminder has not developed her understanding of the learning and development requirements to effectively support all children in their learning. There are limited planned activities and exploration to support children's progress in the six areas of learning. Observations and assessments are not in place to determine children's starting points and capabilities, to track their progress or to plan for their future learning needs. Although children enjoy their time with the childminder and are mostly settled, the lack of observation and assessment inhibits planning for individual children's needs, which means they may not progress as quickly as they could towards the early learning goals.

Children are beginning to explore creative play as they invent an imaginary game, caring for the dolls and making a comfortable home for them. They have some opportunities to explore a selection of electronic toys, such as a mini laptop. They have access to some programmable toys which introduce children to shapes, colour and sound. Children start to gain an awareness of letters and sounds as the childminder works with them to help join the large foam letters together. Younger children enjoy chasing balls around the room or interacting with the childminder's

pet rabbit, indicating they are mostly settled in the childminder's care.

The childminder's strategies to manage children's behaviour appropriately are not always fully effective in promoting positive behaviour. There is a lack of suitable activities to support children's needs after a morning at nursery and their resulting tiredness. This contributes to older children demonstrating a lack of enthusiasm for learning and some being reluctant to engage. Arguments over resources and disputes about sharing means that children are not developing the social and learning skills that will equip them well enough for the future.

Children are supported in the event of any accident or emergency as the childminder has attended up-to-date first aid training. The childminder considers and practises emergency evacuations with children to ensure they are familiar with the processes. Although these strategies help children develop some understanding of how to keep themselves safe, the weaknesses in safeguarding systems mean that overall, children's safety cannot be assured. For instance, the lack of risk assessments to identify potential hazards within the home or the failure to reinforce safety messages to children.

Children develop a poor understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The childminder supports children's comfort and promotes their awareness of hand washing during personal hygiene routines. However, good hygiene procedures are not routinely enforced, as children do not wash their hands before snack or after touching the rabbit. They also drink from each other's cups. The childminder offers children snacks, such as chocolate biscuits and squash. There are limited opportunities for children to explore healthy eating, for instance, during activities or discussions. The children enjoy access to fresh air as they walk to nursery and have some opportunities to play at the park. However, opportunities to play outside are limited when the childminder is minding from her home address, as she lives in a second floor flat and is unable to always make effective use of the communal garden. In addition, the childminder does not make sure this property is adequately ventilated to protect the children from the exposure to the smell of cigarette smoke, which compromises their good health.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	4

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	4
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	4
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	4

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	4
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	4
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	4
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	4

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- ensure that a written statement of procedures is kept in relation to complaints which relate to the requirements of the Childcare Register and which a parent makes in writing or by email (Procedures for dealing with complaints) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 29/05/2012
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment at least once in each calendar year and, immediately where the need for an assessment arises, ensuring that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks. (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 29/05/2012
- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept) 29/05/2012

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept). 10/05/2012
- take action as specified in the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Suitability and safety of premises and equipment) (Procedures for dealing with complaints) 29/05/2012