

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/12/2009
Inspector	Cordalee Harrison
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 1997. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and adult daughter in Dunstable, Bedfordshire. The childminder works with her daughter who is also a registered childminder. All areas of the ground floor of the childminder's home may be used for childminding. However, childminding activities are mainly contained to the playroom and open plan living areas, which includes the breakfast area and the kitchen. Toilet and washing facilities are easily accessible to the children. There is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The family pets are two cats.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight at any one time. When working with her daughter at the above address, they may care for a maximum of 11 children under eight years. Currently, there are nine children on roll, of these, eight are in the early years age group and one is in the later years age group. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice.

Journeys to school to take and collect children involve the use of a car. The childminder attends the local toddler group and a number of children's activity groups. The childminder is a member of the South Bedfordshire Childminding Network. Her qualifications include the National Childminding Association diploma and the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education Level 3 Certificate in Childminding Practice. She is currently working toward NVQ level 3 in childcare and education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are confident learners because they are at the centre of the learning experiences that the childminder provides. The child-centred learning environment and the childminder's positive interaction with children helps them to develop high self-esteem and confidence. The childminder listens carefully to children and puts their views into practice. This helps children to understand that their ideas are important and ensures that the opportunities for learning and development are specific to individuals. The childminder understands that parents are the first educators of their children; she gains information from them about children's starting points and engages with them consistently to plan for the progress of individual children. The childminder maintains continuous improvement; she has addressed recommendations made at the previous inspection and built on the successes of her previous inspections. In addition, she keeps her childcare knowledge up to date with relevant training. Currently, she is well on the way to achieving her level NVQ level 3 in Childcare and Education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- make sure that the risk assessment identifies all items in the home that needs to be checked on a regular basis

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder safeguards children and promotes their welfare, learning and development to a consistently high standard. Through practice, documentation and the provision that she makes for children she demonstrates excellent knowledge of the Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) and guidance. The childminder and her co-minder are meticulous in their organisation and preparation to meet children's individual needs. This ensures that children consistently receive high quality care and learning experiences that are specific to them, and which derives from the EYFS.

The childminder has comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding. She relates it to all areas of childminding practice. Child protection, nutrition, health, hygiene, personal safety and the safety of the premise and equipment are some examples she gives. The childminder is familiar with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board's guidance. She knows the main types of abuse and the signs and symptoms which indicate that children are at risk of abuse and neglect. She is clear about the lines of communication to deal with causes for concern about children's welfare, learning and development.

To meet children's individual needs consistently the childminder uses information from children, parents and other settings that children attend. She plans effectively and delivers activities that are enjoyable, interesting and stimulating to children. Inclusion, continuity and coherence are strong features of the childminding provision. The childminder understands the importance of training to drive improvements. All children benefit equally because the childminder and her co-minder attend a number of childcare courses, which develops their knowledge and skills. They work together successfully to help children to develop new skills and to build on their interest as they learn through play. This results in even judgements across the childminding activities.

Children are safe and secure in the childminder's care. She ensures that they are not alone with anyone who is not vetted. She works closely with her co-minder; they ensure that children are in their sight or can be heard at all times. In addition, all documentation to safeguard and promote children's health and welfare are in place; they are accurate and up to date. Policies and procedures such as the uncollected child and safeguarding children are linked to provide parents with clear information and guidance. The safe and clean physical environment helps children to make effective use the available space. Children move around freely and use ample good quality safe play resources to promote independent learning.

The childminders work together to evaluate their childminding activities, they take account of all of the essential elements, such as the views of children and their parents as well the requirements of the Statutory Framework and guidance. This ensures that the evaluation process is rigorous, it includes strategies to address weaknesses, to generate new ideas and to focus on achieving the best possible outcomes for all children. For example, children are not able to use the rear garden at present. The childminders plan well to ensure that all children get play experiences to promote all aspects of their physical development consistently.

The home environment is maintained to a high standard of hygiene and safety. To further minimise risks for children the childminders ensure that all of the equipment and resources that children use are clean and in good order. The childminder's risk assessment for various outings and the checks for the home are detailed. However, the checklist does not include all serviceable equipment in the home. The childminders shares good quality information with parents, which helps them to understand and cooperate with her and her co-minder to maintain high standards for all children. For example, they inform parents of the expectation that the food that they provide for children to be of a high quality to promote healthy eating and to be a good example for all the children as they eat and socialise together.

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

All children experience consistently high quality learning across the early years curriculum. The childminder and her co-minder carry out regular observations of children. This provides them with good quality information about children's stage of development and their progress. They use the information they gain to inform the provision for daily activities and to plan for the next step in children's progress. This enables them to develop a systematic approach to building on children's experiences as each child makes progress across the stages of their development. The childminder and her co-minder consistently link the next step in children's progress securely to the expectations of the early learning goals. This enables children to make excellent progress towards the early learning goals.

Children explore, experiment and use ample good quality art and creative activities to promote learning across the early years curriculum. They use an extensive range of resources to develop fine movement, hand-eye coordination, ranging from interactive play centres to tools such as suitable knives to cut their fruit at snack time. The childminder supports children very well; this enables children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and value. Children solve problems as they build and construct and complete puzzles that vary in complexity. They develop their understanding of teamwork as they work with their peers to complete tasks. Such as building the train track and developing the area around it to reflect their ideas of planning and landscaping. Children take the lead in activities and the support that the childminder provides extends their learning with open questions; this helps them develop their thinking and work ideas through for themselves.

Children use their imagination, develop communication and social skills as they use

realistic resources to consolidate learning in their pretend play. For example, to promote their understanding of personal safety they identify and discuss safe boundaries indoors and outside. Additionally, they explore books relating to the topic and experience being the police officer, the doctor and the fire fighter in their role-play activities. This approach enables children to extend and consolidate learning, whilst experiencing topics from different angles in fun and interesting ways. It also provides an inclusive learning environment of all children, because older and younger children are all able to access the play opportunities at levels that are appropriate to their stage of development.

Children know that their contributions are valuable because their needs, ideas and choices are central to their activities. For example, the children let the childminder know that they are ready for a snack. It is their choice to use the play dough; they select the tools they want to use to with it. Their outings are to places that are of interest to them. The home environment is vibrant, safe, comfortable and enabling. It is set out with consideration to children's welfare and learning needs; this helps children to know that their needs are important. Children feel safe as they thrive in the childminder's care; she is warm and responsive to them. This assures children's emotional security and builds their confidence to try new experiences. Children are confident to share their learning experiences with others.

Through consistent daily routines, children develop their self-care skills and learn about healthy lifestyles. They practise different aspects as they help themselves to drinking water, eat a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables, learn to put their coats and shoes on and progress from potty training to using the toilet. They are learning to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating, older children know the reasons for doing so. In addition to the modern resources that children use, they develop their skills for the future, as they learn to value themselves and others. Listening, taking turns and behaving well creates an environment where all of the children are able to carry out their activities without disruption. The childminder is a good role model for children, she is calm and responds to children with consideration and respect. This helps children to understand what to expect and how to treat others.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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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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