

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	02/02/2011
Inspector	Jacqueline Nation
Type of setting	Childminder

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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 2000. She lives with her three children, aged 15, 11 and six years, in Leighton Buzzard. The whole ground floor of the property is used for childminding. The childminder uses two bedrooms on the first floor for sleep purposes and the bathroom is also located on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder's home is within walking distance of local amenities, such as schools, shops and parks. The childminder has a dog, cat and a rabbit.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. She is also registered to provide overnight care for two children aged one to eight years. Currently, she has four children on roll, three of whom are in the early years age range. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by this experienced childminder who provides a homely, caring and stimulating environment. Children's learning and development is provided for effectively and children make good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Inclusive practice is assured. Every child is welcomed and treated with equal concern. Effective partnerships ensure children's needs are met and information is exchanged. The childminder shows a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement by reflecting on her practice to improve 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 further the observation and assessment system to ensure the information gained from observations is used to plan the next steps in children's learning, to ensure they move on at a pace suitable to their individual needs
- update the record of risk assessment to include assessment of risks for all outings
- develop further the self-evaluation procedures to include the view of all service users, including children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the action to take in the event of a child protection issue. Safeguarding procedures are shared with parents and outline the childminder's role and responsibility. The premises are secure and the childminder supervises the children well. She conducts risk assessments covering all aspects of her home and garden. Whilst children are kept safe on outings the childminder has yet to update her risk assessment for all the places she visits with the children. All of the required fire control and smoke detection equipment is in place. The childminder has devised an emergency evacuation plan and this is practised with the children. Effective records are maintained with regard to the children's attendance, medication and accidents. Clear agreements and parental consents are in place relating to each child's welfare and overall care. All records are stored to maintain confidentiality.

Children are happy and relaxed as the childminder offers warm, affectionate care that supports their welfare and learning. The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of inclusive practice and has a strong knowledge of each child's background and needs. There is good provision in place to encourage children to have a strong sense of belonging. The environment is well-organised and inviting to children. Toys are easily accessible and the childminder makes changes to the environment to meet the needs of the children attending. The childminder helps children to understand about the society in which they live through a range of outings, planned activities and the use of resources reflecting positive images of culture, gender and disability. She talks to them about different festivals, celebrations, customs and beliefs. The childminder is taking appropriate steps to ensure resources and the environment are sustainable. She has introduced children to aspects of recycling and visits a resource centre to buy materials for art and craft activities.

Partnership with parents and carers are well-established and make a strong contribution to children's achievement and well-being. The childminder works closely with parents from the outset gathering key information about children's individual care needs and parents' preferences. The childminder makes effective links in the local area with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage and other agencies in order to identify and meet children's individual needs and ensure continuity of care. Parents are well-informed about their child's care, progress and achievements, through regular feedback and daily discussions. They receive a comprehensive parent pack which contains information about all aspects of the provision and the childminder's policies and procedures. The childminder regularly seeks the views of parents through discussion and the use of a questionnaire. Parents' comments are highly positive and indicate that they are very satisfied with all aspects of the childminding service.

The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing her provision through the use of self-evaluation, although she has yet to involve children and parents in this process. The childminder is very keen to develop her knowledge

and skills and regularly attends training courses. For example, she has completed safeguarding training, promoting good health and is currently completing a recognised early years and childcare qualification. The childminder has implemented the recommendation from the last inspection and this has a positive impact on children's well being.

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

Children are content and thoroughly enjoy the time they spend in the childminder's care. They benefit from a relaxed, good quality learning environment which helps to enhance their progress and sustain their interest. Children are able to play at their own pace, initiate their own play and happily explore and investigate the resources available to them. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all aspects of their learning and development. Planning and assessment systems have been introduced and children's progress and achievement is recorded. Children's individual observation books include a delightful range of photographs which shows evidence of children's achievement and enjoyment in different play situations. These records are shared with parents on a regular basis to help them support their child's learning at home. There is scope for improving how the information gained from observations is used to plan the next steps in children's learning and ensure they move on at a pace suitable to their individual needs.

The childminder has a good understanding of how children learn. She recognises the learning opportunities in every day activities and by exploring the local environment. Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered well. The childminder encourages good manners, positive relationships and sharing. Children are praised in their achievement and receive stickers to acknowledge how well they have done. They have very good opportunities to explore the environment and enjoy time in the fresh air. For example, they visit local parks and woods, parent and toddler groups, cooking groups and the farm. Children's language and communication skills are well supported as the childminder spends time talking to and playing with children at their level of play and understanding. The childminder skilfully utilises these shared experiences to develop children's use of language through opened ended questions and listening to what the children say. Children are beginning to recognise their name and they have frequent access to mark making resources, such as paint, foam and gloop. Children's understanding of numbers and problem solving is developing well. They explore shape, colour and size as they play and enjoy constructing with blocks and working out how to link the train track together. Children weigh and measure ingredients when baking cakes and weight objects from around the home to find out about things that are heavy and light. A vast range of resources are available to help children develop their imaginative and creative skills. They like dressing up, listening to music and dancing, drawing and painting. Children are supported in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are involved in planting seeds and are able to observe the life cycle of a butterfly. Overall, children have good opportunities to develop skills to support their future learning and are becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners.

Children show an extremely strong sense of security and feel safe within the setting. They arrive with great confidence, talking about what they would like to do and settle quickly to their chosen activity. They show an excellent understanding of the standards of behaviour that are expected and how to keep themselves safe through their play and interactions. Children learn about keeping safe by taking part in activities at the local Children's Centre and the childminder talks to them about road safety and the 'Green Cross Code' while on outings. Children's good health and well-being is promoted very effectively and highly effective steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Children show an exceptional understanding of the importance of following good personal hygiene routines through well-established routines. The childminder makes sure she is aware of children's individual dietary needs and parents' preferences. Food prepared at home by parents is stored safely by the childminder until it needs to be heated and served to children. Children are supported in developing an excellent understanding of healthy eating and make healthy choices at snack and meal times. They enjoy food tasting sessions and make homemade pizzas and fruit sticks. Children have excellent opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities both indoors and outdoors. They are helped to understand the benefits of regular exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They get pleasure from playing in the garden using equipment such as a climbing frame, trampoline and swing. They like to play football, jumping and hopping games, and explore the properties of sand and water.

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	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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