

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	07/04/2010
Inspector	Dinah Round
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 2003. She lives with her partner in Totton, near Southampton, in Hampshire. All areas of the property are available for childminding however this mainly occurs downstairs where there is a dedicated playroom. There is also a fully enclosed rear garden available for outside play. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years, of which three may be in the early years age group, or twelve children with six in the early years age group when working with either one or two assistants. She is currently working with an assistant and minds 15 children aged under eight, of these, seven are in the early years age group. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and preschools. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a warm and relaxed environment. The childminder develops a clear understanding of children's individual needs through working closely with parents. Systems to assess and fully promote children's learning through the Early Years Foundation Stage are still developing. This means that children have access to a satisfactory range of play activities, but are not always supported in moving onto the next step in their learning. Children's welfare is suitably promoted. Systems to effectively evaluate the quality of the provision and promote ongoing improvements for children are not yet fully developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend existing risk assessments systems to ensure each specific outing is included, and keep a record of all times when an assistant is present
- increase knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and develop further the systems of observation and assessment to support children's development and plan for the next steps in their learning
- develop play opportunities further to make sure all children have access to creative activities, and make use of effective questioning to extend children's communication and language skills
- develop systems for self-evaluation so that areas for improvement are identified and acted upon to continually improve outcomes for children

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is generally well organised with most aspects of documentation in place to support children's health and welfare. Children's hours of attendance and times when they are in sole care of an assistant is clearly recorded, although, the actual hours that an assistant is present on the premises are not sufficiently detailed to show ratios are maintained at all times. Appropriate safety measures are followed so that children can move around safely in their play. Some risk assessments have been completed to help identify and minimise risks, although specific outings are not included. The childminder has developed some policy statements which are shared with parents to inform them of her practice. The childminder works with an assistant on a regular basis, the ongoing communication between them ensures that the day runs smoothly and children's individual routines are followed.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow if she has a concern about a child in her care. This helps her to safeguard children. The childminder has a positive attitude towards the ongoing development of her childcare practice and has completed the Diploma in Home-based childcare practice. However, effective systems for evaluating and highlighting all areas for improvement for children are not yet fully established.

The childminder has developed effective partnerships with parents which means children are settled and secure during their time in her care. She works alongside parents to ensure that children's individual needs are well supported. For example, star charts and behaviour diaries are completed to enable her to fully support their developing needs. Information about a child's care and learning is exchanged through informal chats, daily diaries, and children's folders. This keeps parents sufficiently well informed about their child's care during the day, and parents comment the childminder offers a reliable and trustworthy service. The childminder has some informal systems in place to liaise with other early years settings that children attend.

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

Children are happy and settled in the friendly and welcoming environment provided by the childminder and her assistant. They are attentive to the children's individual needs and children respond well to their caring approach. The childminder and her assistant provide a reasonable range of age appropriate play experiences which generally keep children interested and occupied. The childminder is still developing her confidence in using the Early Years Framework Stage framework and has started making some observations of children in their play. These systems are still in the early stages and do not currently focus the next steps in children's learning, which limits the childminder's ability to effectively plan for children's progress. Children are learning to share and take turns, the

childminder provides a positive role model and teaches children to have an awareness and consideration towards the needs of others.

Children receive positive interaction from the childminder and her assistant as they balance their attention well to ensure all children feel valued and included. They take an interest in children's play, although, opportunities to extend children's thinking and language skills through effective questioning is not fully explored. Children develop a sense of belonging, as they see their photographs and artwork displayed, and a two-year-old cuddles up to the childminder to eagerly look at the photographs in the folders. Children have some access to painting, drawing, sand and playdough, although, this is mainly the older children, which limits the opportunities for younger children take part in creative activities. Children are taken on regular walks around their local surroundings and to places of interest, such as Longdown Dairy farm, and the Owl and Otter park. This widens children's learning experiences.

Children's health and safety is suitably supported. They have access to a separate play room and the childminder helps children learn how to keep themselves safe during their play. Children take part in emergency evacuation practices which means that they gain awareness of what to do in an emergency situation. Children are familiar with the regular hand-washing routines and mostly use paper towels, which helps to reduce the spread of infection. Children are generally provided with healthy food, such as snacks of fresh fruit and can access their individual drink container during the day to make sure they do not become thirsty.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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