

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	26/04/2011
Inspector	Jan Moutter
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 first registered in 2003. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. She works in partnership with her husband who is also a registered childminder. They live with their three children aged eight, 11 and 13 years along with two visiting assistants. They live in a large six bedroom, three storey detached property in Upper Swainswick on the eastern edge of the city of Bath. Minded children have access to all the rooms in the house as appropriate and an extensive garden.

The childminder specialises in after school care and organising explorer days out in the local countryside where children, walk, play and study nature. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice.

Registration is for a maximum of six children under eight years, but when working with another childminder and/or an assistant the number is increased to 12 children. There are currently a total of 38 school children on roll for after school care of whom two are in the early years age range. They are members of the National Childminding Association and have a CACHE level 3 Diploma in Playwork.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has embraced all aspects of inclusiveness and offers a setting in which children's individuality is recognised and incorporated in their play and their separate welfare needs are fully promoted. Children make excellent progress in their learning and development because the childminder matches learning to children's individual needs, providing expert additional support when required. The childminder uses and combines her excellent knowledge and skills with her co-childminder husband and assistants to evaluate their provision through discussion. Regular self-evaluation and reflection is a key strength; this includes comments from both the children and their parents and it ensures that any priorities for future development are promptly identified and acted on, resulting in a service that is responsive and very sensitive to the needs of all the children. The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to improving her provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider developing procedures for observing and assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals in order to more clearly identify achievements and next steps.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is fully promoted by a childminder who has a thorough knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. She also ensures that the other adults she works with are up-to-date with the last legislation and any additions to local procedures. The childminder conducts thorough and effective risk assessments to protect the children from harm both on and off site; she reviews hazards on an ongoing basis to avoid accidents. The childminder routinely teaches children about health and safety throughout the day to help them understand how to protect themselves from danger and to develop good habits for later life. The childminder gets to know the children well in order to adapt care to suit their needs. She values diversity and promotes a caring attitude by acting as a good role model and helping children understand the consequence of their actions. She remains calm and attentive throughout the day consequently, the children feel welcome and gain confidence, behave very well and are developing a sense of community. The childminder has ensured all adults living in the household have undergone vetting checks, and her assistants have appropriate qualifications to be in sole charge of children.

Children benefit from the highly effective relationship the childminder has with parents. Detailed information is shared daily regarding children's routines and this ensures they are cared for in line with parents' wishes. The childminder exchanges information with parents regarding children's learning and development and children's achievements outside of the provision are shared verbally and the children's comments can be read at the end of the day on-line. Parents value the very knowledgeable and highly committed childminder and her team. Children and their parents are confident in the childminder and her detailed knowledge of their child. Children make excellent use of the wide range of resources and show good responsibility by listening to the childminder who reminds them about safety when putting items back in the right place. Children were observed helping each other during the session and the older ones helping the younger ones. Parents state that they are extremely happy with the care their children receive commenting that both the childminders involve the children in decision-making and encourages them to think for themselves.

The childminder has established strong relationships with other early years providers. This ensures a collaborative approach to promoting children's learning. She provides children with a wide range of experiences that promote the early learning goals well. The childminder has reflected on her practice and identified clear areas for improvement. However, she has not considered developing procedures for observing and assessing children's progress towards the early learning goals in order to more clearly identify achievements and next steps.

The childminder continues to attend training and this offers her the enthusiasm to implement new ideas into her daily practice. Her unique provision and firm belief in extending knowledge and understanding of the world around us means that the

childminder and her co-childminder husband go that bit further. They provide a variety of explorer trips not only for the minded children but also the local schools and pre-schools. On explorer days children and adults have many excellent opportunities to learn about local nature surrounding our everyday lives. She demonstrates a high commitment to making ongoing improvements to outcomes for children. The childminder, co-childminder and her assistants take a committed and professional approach to childminding. She seeks and follows advice from outside professionals, which helps her to continue to improve her practice and evaluate it extremely well overall. Although registered to provide overnight care and for children under five years of age, the childminder does not currently offer this facility.

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

Lively and inquisitive children arrive after school brimming with confidence. Children are active learners, happy and comfortable in their surroundings. The childminder's setting fires up their imaginations. They can be a gardener one moment, woodworker the next and move to climb a tree or join their friends in a game of football the next, variety drives learning. The challenge is fast and furious and children thrive in the exciting atmosphere of role play, story telling, being close to nature and love the wide range of activities they follow. Children play extremely well together. The childminder proactively promotes equality and diversity and tackles any unfair discrimination, so children observe role modelling of fair and equal treatment between all children and adults. The children are confident enough to confide in the childminder when they feel that they have been dealt with unfairly and called names. The childminder calmly and without hesitation, draws all the children together and gets to the root of the problem and with gentle negotiations gets all involved to think about what they are doing and how their actions have consequences and these should not be used negatively. Both childminders have very high expectations of all the children and their behaviour in their care and the children's progress in their development of personal skills meet their expectations.

After school children make informed decisions about what activity they wish to pursue as the childminder explains what is on offer that day, both in and outdoors. They have access to a wide range of interesting and stimulating ways of exploring their natural surroundings and equipment that is accessible and in plentiful supply. This helps children develop confidence in initiating their own play. Children play in a secure environment and do not leave unnoticed. This means that they have excellent opportunities to be outdoors in the fresh air, both in the garden and on walks through the countryside. Younger children stretch and climb trees, take turns to rock in the garden hammock or build dens. The children's discoveries are documented along with their art work and these discoveries are recorded by the childminder on camera. The website is highly effective at showing and recording up-to-the-minute photographs of the children engaged in activities. The childminder has supported her two assistants in their computers skills, to maintain the very comprehensive website and blog. This worthwhile activity is beneficial to

both children and parents as they can discuss, at home, the fun they have had at the childminders. The childminder has an in-depth knowledge of the children in her care and all children are valued and included, which helps them develop high levels of self-esteem. They have access to a very good variety of resources that promote positive images of diversity in their daily play, helping them develop respect for others.

Children are keen to spend long periods outdoors all year round where they explore natural materials, including wood in all its forms. Children feel valued, safe and relaxed with the team of familiar adults who support their every changing individual needs. All adults actively join in with the children's play and show sincere interest in what children do and say, including their imaginative ideas about for example, witting bay tree sticks. The adults effectively help to extend children's interests and knowledge by observing and assessing what their capabilities are. The team discuss the children's achievements and how they can improve each child's learning and development. Children are shown role modelling of consideration and politeness towards each other. The children effectively learn to keep themselves safe as, over time, they learn about potentially hazardous aspects of the premises.

Children gain a good understanding about hygiene, as they willingly wash before handling food and follow the instructions of the childminder and her assistants who are on hand to remind the children. Children are collected from school and arrive at the childminder's home. The first thing they do after catching up with their mates, is make their own snacks, 'bread and spread', they call it. Robust arrangements ensure that children receive consistent care regarding medication, accidents and illness. The children recognise the importance of taking regular drinks as a way to maintain their health. They plan and enjoy varied, well presented and nutritious foods when on Explorer Days, that comply with any special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy.

Both the childminder and her assistants have an excellent understanding of how children learn and are skilful in delivering a high quality service that caters for children's individual needs and helps them reach their full potential.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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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