

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/04/2010
Inspector	Valerie Fane
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 2003. She lives with her husband, her adult daughter and children aged 12, 10 and nine years in a village to the west of Worcester. She uses a number of part-time assistants. The whole of the property is used for childminding. Accessibility to the premises is up one step. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. The family has one dog and two guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. When working with an assistant she is registered to care for a maximum of eight children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than six may be in the early years age range. There are currently 11 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 14 years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. She provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children settle extremely well with the childminder and make excellent progress because she has a comprehensive understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She follows children's individual interests and uses these to plan themes and associated activities that inspire children's learning. Children's welfare needs are met because the childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that she has a detailed knowledge of each child and their family. The childminder is totally committed to making improvements to her provision and attends regular training to enhance her understanding of different aspects of childcare. Her practice is reflective and she is aware of minor improvements that she could make to some aspects of her provision to raise her standards still further.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the steps taken to prevent the spread of infection when children are washing their hands
- develop the sharing of relevant information where children receive care and education in more than one setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded very effectively because the childminder has recently attended training. She has a secure knowledge of the possible signs of abuse and the procedures she would follow if she has concerns about a child in her care. She has ensured that her assistants also have a secure knowledge and one of them is planning to attend a course on the Common Assessment Framework in the near future which will strengthen their knowledge base even further. Children receive care in a home that is entirely safe and secure and they are supervised effectively at all times. The childminder has completed written risk assessments for the premises and for all outings and these underpin her excellent practice which ensures that children's safety is paramount. Comprehensive written policies underpin all aspects of the childminder's work and are effective in practice. Parents receive copies at the time of admission.

Children thrive because the childminder works very closely with their parents or carers. She gets to know individual children and their families extremely well and follows parents' wishes regarding children's routines and care. Parents complete their pages of the local authority 'Pathway Profiles' to provide additional information about their child. The childminder uses a daily diary to back up the detailed verbal information that she gives parents at the end of each day and parents also use this to provide additional information about their children's needs. Children are very well placed to continue their learning at home. Their learning journeys are a lovely record of their time with the childminder. They contain lots of photographs of children enjoying different activities as well as observations and notes about their development and their next learning priorities. Children who attend other Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from partnership working because the childminder has links with staff at the other settings. She has identified a need to strengthen these links to improve children's continuity of care further. The childminder does not currently care for any children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities but she fully understands the importance of partnership working to support such children.

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's very clear vision for high quality childcare and her total commitment to developing her practice. Both the childminder and her main assistant attend regular training to extend or update their knowledge in many different areas and her assistant is currently working for a Foundation Degree. The childminder's practice is always reflective and she has made many improvements since the last inspection to ensure that she maintains her consistently high standards and excellent outcomes for children. For example, she has developed the use of the 'Pathway Profiles' as an effective tool to assess children's progress and identify their next steps in learning. Future plans include training in child psychology to develop her understanding of the working of young children's minds.

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

Children settle extremely quickly with the childminder and her assistant and develop very close relationships with both adults. Babies clearly feel totally secure after just a few visits. Children behave very well and are constantly engrossed in their play and learning. They learn to respect each other and older children consider the younger ones when they are playing together. Their manners are excellent. They learn to express their emotions through circle time activities and the use of pictorial prompts. Children gain a very good awareness of diversity. They play with toys that reflect other cultures and diversity, such as a doll in a wheelchair, and they use additional resources from the 'Toy library' for particular themes. They take part in activities at a local toddler group to support 'Children in Need' and to increase their awareness that some children do not have loving homes and adequate food and clothing. They celebrate festivals from other countries such as Chinese New Year. They taste Chinese food such as noodles and try to eat with chopsticks. They make lanterns and learn about the 'Year of the tiger'.

Children make outstanding progress. This is because the childminder and her assistant have a very secure understanding of how to plan and provide age-appropriate activities linked to children's current interests and how to observe and assess children's progress to identify clearly their next steps in learning. Children's learning journeys show very clearly how the childminder has planned activities to support children to achieve their learning priorities for the month. Their assessment records show that most children are achieving ahead of the norms for their age.

Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy a wide range of interesting and innovative play opportunities and activities that engage their interest and support their learning. Babies are encouraged to get involved with messy activities from a very early age. They love using chunky paintbrushes to make marks on a piece of paper and look really pleased with their marks. Pre-school children love hand printing and use descriptive language to say how the paint feels on their hand. They make lots of hand prints for a sunshine and then paint the childminder's hand. The childminder makes excellent use of spontaneous learning opportunities and encourages children to compare the size of the two hands. Children count how many prints they have made and decide how many more they want. When children have finished a painting activity they choose what toys they would like from the cupboard. They show sustained concentration as they play for a long time with an electronic learning game that helps them to follow verbal instructions and supports their recognition of numbers and colours and their sorting skills. Activities such as these also support children's development of skills for the future. They enjoy many interesting outings. For example, they go to the farm to feed the pigs and chickens and to hold the baby lambs.

In most respects children develop a very good awareness of healthy lifestyles. Children eat healthy foods and are frequently involved in food preparation. For example, they make pizzas for lunch. They know they must wash their hands first

and talk about what they want on their pizzas. They develop awareness of quantity because they decide how much grated cheese they need for four children and they decide what size pizza they want. They express their needs by asking for a small rolling pin to roll out the dough and they explore the texture of the dough with their hands. They use tools competently as they spoon the tomato sauce onto their pizza base and they decorate it with ham, cheese, pineapple and mushrooms. The childminder is aware that children could be further protected from possible cross infection by improving the arrangements for hand drying.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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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