

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY321026
Inspection date	09/12/2009
Inspector	Deborah Jacqueline Newbury
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 2005. She lives with her husband and two children, aged seven and five, in Lower Earley, near Reading in Berkshire. The home is close to parks, shops, schools and is on local bus routes.

All areas of the ground floor of the childminder's house are used for childminding with bathroom facilities provided in this area. An upstairs bedroom is used for sleeping as necessary. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time. There are three places for children within the early years age range. The childminder is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is currently minding a total of four children within the early years age group. Days and times of children's attendance vary.

The childminder attends local toddler groups and takes children to the local park, shops and the library. They sometimes visit soft play centres. The childminder also walks children to and from school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive in a warm and welcoming environment where they have lots of fun and make good progress in their learning. The childminder has a good awareness of their individual needs and works closely with parents to meet these. She promotes most aspects of children's welfare very effectively and ensures that most records relating to childminding activities are in place. The childminder is passionate about the children in her care and is strongly committed to the continuous improvement of outcomes for children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update the record of risk assessment to include any assessments of risks for outings and trips and review arrangements for ensuring the safety of the sleeping environment
- improve further existing arrangements for safeguarding children, for example by keeping a written record of any pre-existing injuries children arrive with.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder ensures that most aspects of children's safety receive good attention overall. She is secure in her knowledge of child protection and the action she should take if she has any concerns about a child. She talks to parents about any pre-existing injuries children arrive with although does not maintain a written record of these to further safeguard children. The childminder keeps a written record of risk assessment for the home and garden, but has not extended this to include the different outings and trips children go on. She is, however, very aware of her responsibility to supervise children carefully at all times. The childminder ensures her home and garden are secure, thus ensuring children cannot leave unsupervised and preventing intruders from gaining access. She organises her home, resources and the daily routine around the individual needs of the children who attend her setting although arrangements for assessing the safety of the sleeping environment on a daily basis are not always effective. Children have ample space to move around and sit and play in comfort. They access a good range of toys that are arranged to be easily accessible. This encourages them to make their own decisions about what they do and supports their developing independence. Children also benefit from a varied and balanced day, with good opportunities for free exploration, to take part in adult-planned activities and outings within the local community.

The childminder develops good relationships with parents, who are very confident in the care their children receive. She makes sure they are well informed about the way she organises her childminding service and how children spend their time through the issue of a comprehensive range of written policies, a daily informal exchange of information and the provision of a written diary. Parents regularly view the development records the childminder keeps on their children and they are invited to contribute to these. Consequently, children benefit from continuity of care and a shared approach to supporting their learning and development. In written testimonials provided for the inspection, parents comment on how 'happy and content their children are,' that they 'engage in many fun activities that contribute to learning' and that 'the childminder is encouraging with all things to do with development.' The childminder appreciates the importance of working in partnership with other providers who also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in her care to promote a cohesive approach to their care and education. She has devised good procedures to promote this; for example, by sharing the development records she keeps on children with their key workers and making sure she is aware of what topics children are doing at pre-school and looking for ways she can build on these at home.

Children's individuality is recognised and nurtured by the childminder. She gives equal attention and support to all and successfully manages the differing needs and wishes of the children present. For instance, by respecting children's decisions not to take part in particular activities and by adapting activities as necessary so they are accessible and achievable to each child at their individual level. Children are helped to appreciate similarities and differences through the provision of toys and books that reflect positive images of diversity and by participating in relevant

activities. The childminder gently encourages children to share and do things together.

The childminder is fully committed to the children in her care and is keen to improve her existing practice and outcomes for children. She recognises that ongoing training is beneficial both to her as a way of improving her knowledge because things change and to children, because it means she is able to offer them new experiences. The childminder has a clear understanding of the strengths of her service and has identified some areas for further development; for instance, by encouraging parents to complete home observations on their children more frequently and sharing these with her. She uses formal self-evaluation systems to monitor her provision and seeks the views of parents and children. The childminder has successfully addressed the recommendation made at her last inspection. She has also improved her use of observation and planning and feels that this has led to her being able to move children forward in their learning more effectively.

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

Children are very relaxed and settled. They enjoy a good relationship with the childminder and have the confidence to approach her freely to express their needs and wishes. The childminder has a very positive attitude to behaviour management and effectively fosters children's self-esteem and confidence with lots of praise and encouragement. She promotes good manners and shows how pleased she is when children remember to say 'please and thank-you' without being prompted. Children enjoy their play and remain interested and involved as they explore the different resources and activities on offer. Good quality interaction from the childminder enhances children's experiences and learning. She engages in lots of conversation with older children and asks questions and acknowledges younger children's efforts to communicate. Children's input is valued and constantly sought; for instance, the childminder encourages children to take on the role of teacher and to explain to her how to do things such as making a Christmas tree from playdough. Children enjoy creating Christmas decorations using lots of different materials. They are offered support but allowed the freedom to explore the resources in their own way and to express their own ideas. Consequently they concentrate well and remain engrossed. They are proud of the finished results and announce that they will leave them to dry and then take them home to share with their families. Younger children improve upon their coordination, practise their problem-solving skills and investigate balance as they build towers of building blocks. The childminder sits on the floor alongside them and counts as each block is added to the tower. She draws their attention to the growing height of the tower and seeks their input as to whether they can reach the top or if they need to stand up. Children improve their knowledge and understanding of the world as they explore their local community. They gain social skills as they attend different toddler groups and mix with other children and adults. The childminder chooses the groups she goes to because of the additional play experiences they offer children. She maintains a development file for each child in her care, showing their achievements in each area of learning and uses the information gathered to identify and plan for the next steps in their learning. Children are effectively supported in developing the skills they need for

the future as a result of the childminder's support and encouragement and the provision of good range of resources and experiences across the key skill areas.

Children learn how to keep themselves and others safe with the support of the childminder. She consistently intervenes and offers explanations to children when they engage in potentially hazardous practices; for example, putting things in their mouths. She talks to older children about the need to sit up at the 'big table' to do some activities or to have particular toys out when younger children are asleep because they contain small pieces which might be dangerous for the little ones. Children learn about road safety and regularly take part in fire drills.

Children are accommodated in a clean, well-maintained home. The childminder takes positive steps to minimise the potential for the spread of infection and helps children to become independent and learn about healthy life styles. All children are encouraged to wash and dry their hands in readiness for mealtimes and even the younger children are asked if they can go and fetch their cup when they decide they want a drink. Children are provided with a variety of healthy meals and snacks and they have the opportunity to make their own pizzas, using vegetables as a topping and to go to the shops to choose different fruits to try. Children benefit from fresh air and exercise as they spend time out of doors every day. They play in the garden and go to the park. The childminder chooses to walk with children as much as possible rather than use the car, which helps to reinforce the importance of physical activity for everyone.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	3
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

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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	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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