

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	209168
Inspection date	19/01/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1994. She lives with her husband and one adult child in a large village near to the town of Spalding in Lincolnshire. The whole of the childminder's house is registered, although childminding predominantly takes place on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, pre-schools, the library, shops and parks. The childminder drives to the local toddler group. The family has one rabbit.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She 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. She is currently minding three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Childcare, Learning and Development and is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder creates a very welcoming home-from-home environment which very effectively supports all children's welfare needs and ensures they are extremely happy and comfortable in her care. Children participate in an exceptional range of activities which allows them to make excellent progress overall in their learning. The childminder is skilled and experienced in observing and assessing children's skills and, as a result, clear records of children's achievements are kept. Children are highly valued and their individuality clearly respected and celebrated. Close, positive relationships have been formed with all children and their families. The childminder demonstrates a total commitment towards continuous improvement and effectively monitors and evaluates her practice to a high standard.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing even closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing further information about children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very secure understanding of safeguarding issues and how to effectively deal with concerns. She has undertaken advanced child protection training and ensures that a multitude of policies are shared with parents that demonstrate how she will safeguard and protect their children effectively. Children play in an extremely safe and secure environment due to the childminder's thorough understanding of assessing risks within the home and on outings. For example, written documents demonstrate how the childminder decides when a child is old enough to walk beside the pushchair without a wrist strap and the safety rules that are discussed with the child before this happens. Written records to support risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated and a daily record is kept to ensure any hazards are immediately identified and acted upon. Documentation is kept to a high standard and all required policies, procedures and records are in place.

The childminder's home is welcoming and very inviting for children and their families. A designated playroom offers children a wide range of toys, resources and play equipment, all at their level so that they have extremely good opportunities to make independent choices in their play. Children's work, educational posters and children's displays adorn the walls of the playroom and this contributes to children feeling a strong sense of belonging and shows that their contributions are truly valued. Children are able to effectively gain an understanding of diversity and an appreciation of other people subtly through their play, planned activities and the wide variety of resources and images provided.

The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure continuity of care and to enable her to meet children's changing needs. There is a constant exchange of information between the childminder and parents to ensure that the parents are very well informed about their child's day and the progress they are making. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning. For example, children take home books they have borrowed from the library to share with their parents. Also, Scruffy the toy dog goes home with children if they have an important event happening and parents help their child to contribute to 'The Adventures of Scruffy' book. Parents receive a wealth of information about the service that the childminder provides. For example, a quarterly newsletter is issued and a daily diary ensures parents are fully aware of their child's day. Children's 'all about me' assessment records go home each term so that parents can fill in their own observations of their children's learning at home. Both parents and children speak extremely highly of the quality of care offered by the childminder. One parent notes that she is 'amazing' whilst a child comments that she is 'very funny'. Good partnerships have been established with other local providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in the childminder's care. Clear information is shared relating to children's welfare. Strategies shared to help with settling in ensure that the transition is smooth. Some key aspects of children's development are also shared. However, the childminder might consider how to develop these partnerships in relation to sharing more specific information about children's learning and development and how this can be consistently supported

across the settings.

The childminder is strongly committed to maintaining continuous improvement and has kept her knowledge and understanding of all aspects of childcare and education constantly up-to-date through attending numerous training courses. The childminder is focused, ambitious and passionate about providing the best possible outcomes for all the children in her care. Comprehensive and effective systems of self-evaluation have been established which allow her to monitor and evaluate her practice on a regular basis to consistently improve outcomes for all children. Since the last inspection, there have been significant developments that have further enhanced the provision: displays have been introduced, records and policies have been made much more comprehensive and systems to enable parents and children to contribute their thoughts and views have been effectively implemented.

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

The childminder truly recognises and embraces the individuality of all the children she cares for and, as a result, extremely secure and loving relationships have been formed. Children enjoy the laughter they share together, for example, when they repeatedly shout 'wakey, wakey' as they pretend to wake their doll up. Children experience a wide variety of play opportunities which enable them to make excellent progress through all areas of learning. The childminder has an excellent understanding of learning through play and supports children very effectively, for example, through open ended questioning and meaningful discussion. She is skilled at filtering into everyday activities aspects of learning such as colour recognition and number language. She fully understands how children learn. For example, as children begin to learn colour recognition, she gives them a coloured object and asks them to find a matching coloured object rather than expecting them to know the name of the colour straight away. Observation and assessment records provide a very accurate account of children's development. Observations are clearly linked to the early learning goals, with meaningful next steps identified which aids the childminder in helping to plan individually for children's developmental needs.

Children play in a word-rich environment where posters and words are displayed. Young children love to share books and demonstrate that they understand that print contained in books carries meaning. For example, they spontaneously move their finger under each word as they 'read' to themselves. Children visit the library each week and borrow a book to share at home with their family; this encourages an early love of reading and books. Story time on the cushions is a daily occurrence where children enjoy books and story sacks with props such as 'Handa's Surprise' which also gives opportunities to learn about other cultures and traditions. Children have a vast range of opportunities to make marks which supports their early literacy skills. For example, they mark recognisable facial features in the play dough for the first time and they experiment using different implements such as the end of the rolling pin to see the size and shape of the marks made. Children are very articulate for their young age. This is because the childminder is skilled at promoting and extending their communication skills, asking

them simple questions and promoting discussions. Their independence is highly promoted. The childminder asks them to make many choices and decisions for themselves and they show great pride when they successfully take their shoes, gloves and coat off by themselves and place them in their very own box for personal belongings. Children ably solve problems and confidently use number language in their play. They use a wide range of resources that develop their understanding of size and shape. Children learn about the natural environment; the seasonal changes, reflections in puddles and growing their own tomatoes, sunflowers and seeds. They become involved in the local community, for example, providing displays for the window of the local radio station, buying stamps and posting letters back to the childminder's home, and attending the church's flower festival. All of these activities begin to lay very secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children have excellent opportunities to express their creativity through an exhaustive range of art and craft activities, imaginative play and music. Children spend quality time in the fresh air on a daily basis. Regular trips to local parks and places of interest and the use of the wide range of equipment in the garden allow children great opportunities to be physically active. They are fully encouraged to embrace a healthy lifestyle through taking part in government schemes such as Change4Life and have exchanged supermarket vouchers for equipment to help with their balance and coordination.

Children's welfare is promoted very well. All documentation which safeguards children's health is maintained to a high standard and a valid first aid qualification allows the childminder to effectively deal with minor injuries. Children are taught the importance of maintaining their own health and hygiene from a young age and are provided with individual flannels for washing and drying their own hands, which effectively reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Parents provide all of the meals for their children. The childminder shares her healthy eating policy with parents so that they are fully aware of her commitment towards promoting healthy eating. Children receive constant praise and encouragement as well as excellent levels of adult attention. This helps them to build up a very high level of confidence and self-esteem. Older children devise their own house rules and these are displayed so that they all know what is expected and can take ownership of their behaviour. Children learn about their own and others' safety through discussions, practical activities such as crossing roads safely and through posters on the wall that help to keep safety at the forefront of their minds.

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	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

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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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