

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	209183
Inspection date	20/01/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 2000. She lives with her husband and one adult child in the market town of Spalding, Lincolnshire. All areas of the downstairs of the property are registered for use by minded children and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, the library, local children's centre, shops and parks. The family has two dogs.

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 two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder has a registered assistant but does not currently use this facility. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Children's Care, 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 provides a very high quality provision for children; they enjoy an exceptional range of activities and learning experiences which helps them to make excellent progress in their learning and development. The childminder is exceptional at promoting inclusive practice, she recognises and values the uniqueness of each child and ensures their individual needs are met through highly effective communication with parents. Resources are extremely well deployed and enable children to become very active learners. The childminder's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding, she regularly updates her knowledge and skills and this positively impacts on the children as outcomes for them are exemplary.

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 further ways of obtaining parental feedback to help inform self-evaluation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates an extremely good understanding of the procedures regarding the safeguarding of children and a very high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. Exceptionally well-organised procedures and records completely underpin children's safety and well-being. Robust risk assessments are in place for both the premises, outdoor area and all types of outing undertaken with the children. Consequently, potential hazards are minimised and children's safety is secured. A wealth of ongoing activities and reminders about safety issues help children build up their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn to use 'listening ears' when learning to cross roads safely and wear their high visibility jackets on all outings.

The childminder demonstrates a true passion for her work and is highly motivated to continue to make changes that drive improvement and further improve the outcomes for children. Consequently, the childminder has learnt the benefits of self-evaluation and reflective practice and this means that she has an outstanding capacity to improve. The childminder values the benefits of continuing professional development and attends a wealth of training courses to extend her skills and support further improvement in her practice.

The childminder's exemplary understanding of anti-discrimination means that she provides a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. She ensures that her home is warm and welcoming for all and promotes a sense of inclusion which recognises everyone as special and unique. Children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported and continuous discussion with parents ensures that the childminder is fully informed, for example about key words children may use in their home language. A wealth of resources and positive images are displayed, further underpinning children's understanding and respect for the diverse society in which they live. The learning environment is organised and arranged in an outstanding way that very much facilitates active learning. The childminder makes exceptionally good use of the extensive range of high quality resources. Her home is very welcoming and resources are well organised and accessible, enabling children to make independent choices about their play. For example, the playroom is full of a wide range of toys and resources and this extends into the lounge where further resources are presented in a child-friendly way. The hallway features individual coat pegs for children's belongings, as well as key information for parents and photographs of children enjoying activities with an explanation of how they link to the six areas of learning. The outdoor area is a very stimulating learning environment and has been carefully considered. For example, a covered area has been developed to encourage outdoor play all year round and activities such as story time and role play in the willow wigwam and the positioning of lengths of angled drain pipes attached to the fence give children extended learning opportunities.

Although the childminder does not currently care for any children also attending other settings, she has worked very closely with other providers in the past, demonstrating very secure methods of partnership working that ensure

consistency and excellent information sharing opportunities between settings. Parent's views are important to the childminder and they share these with her through discussion. The childminder is considering ways to gather more formal feedback, for example through questionnaires, to further support her self-evaluation systems. Letters seen at the inspection from parents contain extremely positive comments such as how pleased they are with the 'super relationship' between their child and the childminder and how they very much appreciate the documentation of the 'magical moments' that happen when they are not there. Another positive comment is that the childminder has 'gone beyond my expectations'. Parents are fully involved in their children's progress and learning. For example, comments from them about what they know their children can do are filtered into assessment records to ensure that the childminder has a complete picture of the child's learning and development. Children's views are actively sought and their suggestions are valued and acted upon. For example, the childminder periodically gives them a catalogue and an allowance to purchase new resources that they agree upon and their suggestions and requests for activities are responded positively to.

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 warm and loving relationships have been formed. This helps children to feel very secure and settled. Children are provided with a huge range of activities and learning experiences which enable them to make excellent progress in all areas of their learning. The childminder is highly skilled and enthusiastic as she supports children in their play. She takes their lead and makes very effective use of spontaneous learning opportunities. For example, when children find incorrect toys in the toy box, she asks them to find the correct box and then further extends this to include a variety of objects to relocate. She uses props such as large puppets to support learning, for example, modelling good manners as the puppet shares the toys with children.

Comprehensive observation and assessment records and systems have been firmly established for each child. They are highly effective and provide a very informative account of the journey children are making in their learning. Observations are clearly linked to the early learning goals, with meaningful next steps identified to aid the childminder in helping to plan individually for children's developmental needs. The provision made for children's next steps of learning is clearly documented which demonstrates the excellent progress they are making overall. Observations made by parents are included to ensure that the childminder has a complete picture of the children's learning and development.

Children's independence is given paramount consideration. Even the very youngest children show high levels of independence as they help prepare their own snack, wash their own hands and see to personal needs such as blowing their nose. They behave very well due to the stimulating environment and the excellent levels of attention and interaction received from the childminder. Children have a wide

variety of opportunities to mark-make, for example in crazy foam, water painting outside and drawing. They are encouraged to develop a love of books including oversized books which helps to promote further enjoyment of reading. Children make very good progress in their language and communication skills as the childminder responds well to their attempts at speech, asks them lots of questions and repeats back key words in an effective manner. Young children are able to follow simple instructions. For example, when the childminder plays a game, periodically saying 'stop' as children play the drum, children correctly respond. Children ably solve problems, make connections in their play and are beginning to learn about simple calculation. They are very curious. For example, when the childminder's mobile phone rings in her bag, they try to find out where the noise is coming from. They have vast opportunities to learn about growing as they plant and tend seeds, flowers, fruit and vegetables. Children use a wide range of resources, such as programmable and remote controlled toys, to promote their early information technology skills. They make excellent use of local community amenities. For example, they attend the local children's centre groups, take part in local traditions such as the Pumpkin Parade and learn about shopping by paying, scanning and packing foods. Younger children's sensory development is very well promoted as the childminder gathers many natural resources for them to explore and investigate. 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 a wide range of art and craft activities, role play, imaginative play and music. For example, younger children thoroughly enjoy looking through the box of high quality musical instruments, experimenting making different sounds and using their fine motor skills to hold, shake, bang or rattle the equipment. Children spend quality time in the fresh air on a regular basis. Regular trips to local parks and places of interest and the use of an exhaustive range of play equipment in the garden allow children great opportunities to be physically active. They are fully encouraged to embrace a healthy lifestyle through growing their own foods and being introduced to new foods and healthy options.

Children's welfare is extremely well safeguarded. All documentation which safeguards children's health is maintained to a high standard. The childminder has refreshed her first aid qualification more frequently than the required three years which keeps her knowledge very up-to-date and ensures that she is always able to effectively deal with minor injuries. Children are taught the importance of maintaining their own health and hygiene from a young age and the facilities are organised to fully support this. For example, a liquid soap dispenser is mounted on the wall at younger children's height and steps are provided so that children can take responsibility and be completely independent. Furthermore, paper towels are used for drying hands and this effectively reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Parents provide most of the meals for the younger children. The childminder shares her healthy eating policy with parents so that they are fully aware of her commitment towards promoting healthy eating. For school aged children, the childminder provides a substantial and well-presented platter of snacks such as houmous, breadsticks, tortilla wraps and salad items. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement as well as excellent levels of adult attention and interaction. This helps them to build up a very high level of confidence and self-esteem.

Children have helped devise a set of 'house rules' and these are regularly reviewed and updated so that all children know what is expected and can take ownership of their behaviour.

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	1
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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