

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/11/2009
Inspector	Kelly Eyre
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 1987. She lives with her husband and one adult child in the Putnoe area of Bedford. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder provides care on each weekday during term-time and school holidays. She is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range and is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years and this provision is registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently eight children attending on a part-time basis in this age group. Children on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register share the same facilities as those on the Early Years Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is confident and experienced and demonstrates a genuine desire to continuously improve her practice, using self-evaluation effectively to help review her work. This enables her to build a clear picture of her daily practice and continue to provide a service which is responsive to children's needs. The childminder works well in partnership with parents and takes time to get to know each child, meaning that she builds up a thorough understanding of each child's needs and interests. She uses this to ensure that their needs are met and they are offered appropriate support and activities that promote their welfare and development. The childminder's efficient organisation of policies and records enables her to provide consistent care and promote children's well-being.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the planning procedures to show how children's next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning in order to provide further experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development
- develop further the use of the self-evaluation process as the basis of ongoing review of practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is consistently promoted because the childminder has a sound understanding of her responsibilities relating to safeguarding children, attending additional training in order to refresh her knowledge. This area is further supported

by a practical written procedure which enables her to identify any child at risk and take appropriate action. Effective risk assessments cover all areas and mean that hazards are minimised and children's safety is promoted. The childminder offers children ongoing explanations to help them build up their understanding of safety issues. For example, young children understand the relevance of road safety procedures.

The childminder demonstrates a continuing enjoyment of her daily work and is committed to making changes that improve the outcomes for children. Effective self-evaluation procedures help her to identify areas for improvement. For example, recent improvements include the introduction of low-level storage so that children can see the toys and books and make independent choices about their play. The childminder has a clear vision for the ongoing improvement of her practice but does not fully use the self-evaluation process to evaluate the impact of the changes made. Children are offered a range of opportunities that support their learning and development because the childminder makes good use of resources and available space. Her home is well organised to accommodate the children's varying needs. She also uses community resources, such as parks, soft play centres and the library to provide an extended range of opportunities.

The childminder has built up her understanding of diversity and anti-discriminatory practice. She uses this knowledge to help ensure that her childminding service is inclusive to all children and their families. She works closely with parents to make sure that she understands each child's background and needs. Children's self-esteem and sense of belonging are promoted as their views are valued and their interests are reflected in the activity planning and provision of resources. The childminder has good relationships with parents and carers, enabling them to exchange information about their children and ensure that the childminder can offer them appropriate care and support. Daily discussions and the sharing of children's assessment records mean that parents are well-informed about their child's activities and progress. Consistency of care is promoted as the childminder has a good understanding of the importance of maintaining close links with other professionals. For example, she liaises with the school and pre-school to support children and provide appropriate complementary activities.

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

Children make good progress and are supported in achieving because the childminder has a thorough understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She implements practical assessment procedures, using information gained from the assessments to inform activity planning and provide relevant activities to promote children's individual development. However, this is not fully promoted because the planning procedures do not show how children's next steps are consistently fed into the overall planning. The childminder's confidence and experience support her in maintaining a safe, welcoming environment and children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel secure. They confidently select toys and play independently or with the childminder. They are therefore actively involved in their learning, developing positive attitudes to this.

The environment is interesting and resources are generally accessible, enabling children to make independent choices. Children's enjoyment is enhanced as the childminder also acquires additional resources according to their needs and interests. The childminder's good planning means that children are encouraged to be active learners and explore. For example, they grow tomatoes and pepper plants, helping to tend these and noting the conditions needed for the plants to thrive. Everyday activities are used to offer children opportunities to solve problems. For example, they count how many children are present and how many bowls they therefore need for snack time.

Children's development is promoted because the childminder confidently encourages them to develop their own play, offering appropriate support whenever needed. For example, children choose to play with a toy camera and are encouraged to talk about the pictures as they turn the buttons. Children's experiences are enhanced as the childminder readily joins in with their play. For example, when children choose a book she captures and maintains their interest by singing associated songs. Children's play and learning are extended because the childminder makes good use of incidental learning opportunities. For example, after reading a book about a big and a little pig children discuss the concept of different sizes then draw around their own and the childminder's hands so that they can compare the sizes. The childminder uses her knowledge of each child to make the best use of their individual interests to promote their development. For example, after noting that children particularly enjoy music she introduces additional nursery rhymes and musical instruments; the children thoroughly enjoy marching around the room, playing instruments in time and pointing to the different body parts as they sing along.

Children's emotional development is promoted as they develop secure relationships with the childminder. She acts as a good role model, remaining calm, polite and fair and offering children clear explanations about their behaviour. Children respond positively to this and are developing a good understanding of appropriate behaviour. Their knowledge of diversity is increased as they participate in discussions and access relevant resources. For example, they access books to research different countries, finding out about religion, beliefs, climate and customs around the world. The childminder's good partnerships with parents mean that children who use English as an additional language or have special educational needs are offered appropriate support and activities that promote their development. This is further supported as the childminder uses alternative forms of communication, such as Makaton sign language.

Children are developing a clear understanding of the relevance of good hygiene practices. Young children wash their hands before eating and are learning to help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses. They have opportunities to develop physical skills as they enjoy activities such as walking in the woods and using a soft play centre. The childminder's good interaction with the children encourages the development of their language and communication skills. For example, children readily engage in discussions about pictures they have drawn, describing the detail of these.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	2
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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