

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	220470
Inspection date	25/02/2011
Inspector	Ann Austen

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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 15 and 12 years in the town of Towcester, Northamptonshire. The childminder's home is close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childcare purposes, including toilet and sleeping facilities. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

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. She is currently minding one child in this age group. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes children to and collects them from the local school. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder provides a warm, caring child-friendly environment. Each child's individuality is recognised by the childminder, which ensures that their welfare needs are well met and enables them to make satisfactory progress in their learning and development according to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Safeguarding procedures are robust. The childminder is continuing to develop her knowledge of the learning and development requirements. She forms positive relationships with parents and understands that partnership working with other professionals further enhances the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder is developing her skills to use self-evaluation to identify key strengths and areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems to ensure that ongoing assessment is used to plan and provide experiences which are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- lead and develop a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of the provision for all children
- develop further systems to encourage parents to contribute information relating to their child's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust which ensures that children are well protected and given high priority at all times. The childminder knows how to identify children at risk of harm and how to liaise with the appropriate child agencies. The childminder supervises the children well and uses risk assessment to identify and minimise potential risks, balancing freedom for children with setting safe limits. The premises are secure and safety equipment is used according to the ages and needs of the children attending. The childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge. Clear arrangements are in place if children become sick in the childminder's care, for the recording and monitoring of any accidents and the safe administration of medicines.

The childminder uses her maternal experience to provide a child-centred environment. A selection of policies and procedures are maintained and made accessible to parents. For example, a safeguarding children policy, a parental involvement policy and a complaints procedure. The childminder has acted on the recommendations made at the last inspection and is beginning to self-evaluate the quality of the provision. However, this is not sufficiently developed to provide an accurate appraisal of its effectiveness and what needs to be done in order to ensure continuous improvement. The childminder treats all children with respect and equal concern. As a consequence children receive attentive care, warmth and support. Resources adequately support children's learning and development and the childminder takes steps to ensure that the resources and environment are sustainable.

The childminder is committed to ensuring that the service provided is inclusive for all families. She develops positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are able to view the childminder's portfolio and have access to information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder has a good knowledge of each child's background and needs. This is because parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they start to attend which helps to ensure continuous and consistent care for children. For example, information is exchanged to ensure that specific dietary needs and preferences are catered for and any medical needs are known and accurately met. However, systems to encourage parents to contribute information relating to their child's learning and development are not effectively established. Parents complete questionnaires about the provision and speak positively about the service provided. They comment on the 'warm, friendly setting'.

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

Children are content, settled and willingly take part in a range of adult-lead and child-initiated activities. They make sound progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder is continuing to develop her knowledge of the learning and

development requirements. However, observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles are not consistent or used to identify future learning priorities against the Development Matters framework. This potentially compromises children's learning and development.

Children settle quickly in the friendly and relaxed family atmosphere. They interact well and enjoy their time in the childminder's care; relationships are warm and caring. The childminder takes the lead from the children, building on their ideas as they play. She generally asks appropriate questions to further encourage children to think and extend their learning. Children are encouraged to learn to take responsibility as they help to tidy away the resources. They are developing their appreciation of books, looking at those independently as well as enjoying a story by the childminder. Through the provision of mark-making resources children learn to communicate with marks and pictures, as they draw and paint. Children are encouraged to count and are developing their problem solving skills, for example, they complete puzzles and work out how many knives, forks and placemats are required when they lay the table. They learn to recognise written numbers as they walk around the local community.

Children enjoy activities which promote their creative development. For example, children finger paint and work as a team to create larger scale underwater scenes. Children dance, sing and play instruments such as the tambourine. They use their imaginations as they pretend to be pirates on the apparatus in the park. Children are learning to appreciate diversity and develop a positive view of society and the wider world. They meet different individuals as they explore the local community and celebrate festivals such as Diwali and Christmas. Children handle resources such as books, dolls, puzzles and small world resources which positively reflect people of other races, cultures and abilities. This helps children to appreciate our similarities and differences as they play.

Children actively learn to keep themselves safe because the childminder has clear rules and routines to maintain their safety inside and outside the home. For example, younger children hold the childminder's hand and learn how to cross the road safely. Children practice regular fire drills, are taught not to touch dogs and cats, learn about stranger danger and how to safely use apparatus in the park. Children respond to the childminder's appropriate behaviour management strategies that take into account their age and stage of development. This is supported by the childminder who encourages the children to play harmoniously together, to share and take turns. Children receive positive support, praise and encouragement which effectively increases their confidence and self-esteem.

Young children are content and settled because their health, physical and dietary requirements are well met. Children benefit from a clean, warm and comfortable childcare environment and are learning to keep themselves healthy by adapting good personal hygiene routines. For example, older children know that they should wash their hands after using the bathroom and before snacking. This is further enhanced by the childminder who provides individual hand towels for each child to dry their hands and ensures that the table is wiped with anti-bacterial spray before snack time. This actively sustains good levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children participate in activities which develop their

coordination and body control. For example, children run, play football, climb apparatus, swing on the rope swing and move over the wobbly bridge at the park. The children engage in activities that develop hand-to-eye coordination, for example, children complete puzzles and use tools such as knives to spread the tomato puree onto the pizza dough.

Children's good health is promoted by a range of freshly prepared meals and snacks. For example, children enjoy spaghetti bolognaise, mixed salad, garlic bread, fish, chicken dishes and fresh fruit. Children are encouraged to try new foods and are often involved in helping to prepare their own snacks. For example, children thoroughly enjoy making pizza. Meal times are relaxed, social occasions where children sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company and develop good table manners. Children are encouraged to drink throughout the day which ensures they remain well hydrated and comfortable.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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