

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/04/2011
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 1995. She lives with her husband and four adult children on a farm in the village of Weston, Northamptonshire. The childminder's home is close to the local park and school. 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 has pet pigs and chickens.

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 two children 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 and collects children from the local school.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into this friendly environment. They make good progress in their learning and development and are valued as individuals by the childminder who knows them well. Policies and procedures are effective and inclusive for those children who attend. The childminder builds strong relationships with parents to underpin the children's welfare and development. She understands the importance of developing relationships with other providers and services to promote integrated care and education for all children. The childminder uses self-evaluation as a process for identifying strengths and areas for development in her provision to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the written risk assessment to ensure that it includes all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis
- develop further systems to ensure that observations and assessments are used to track children's progress against the expectations of the learning and development requirements.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities relating to safeguarding children. She has secure knowledge which effectively enables her to identify any child at risk from harm, for example, the indicator signs of abuse and neglect and is familiar with the procedures to follow to report concerns. The childminder supervises the children well and has a good awareness of how to keep them safe. She carries out regular risk assessments. However, the written record does not clearly identify all potential hazards within the environment. This potentially compromises the children's safety. The childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge. Clear procedures are in place to record and monitor any accidents and for the safe administration of medicines. This ensures that children's health and well-being is well promoted.

The childminder uses her maternal experience to provide a child-centred environment. She acts as a positive role model and works hard to ensure that the service provided is responsive to the needs of the children and families who attend. A selection of policies and procedures are maintained and made accessible to parents. For example, a safeguarding children policy, a behavioural management policy and a complaints procedure. The childminder uses self-evaluate to monitor the quality of the provision and understands the importance of using this as an effective tool to sustain continuous improvement. All recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met. A current paediatric first aid certificate is now maintained, the certificate of registration is displayed, written permission is obtained to transport children in a vehicle and parents are now made aware of the procedures to deal with concerns and complaints.

The childminder promotes an inclusive environment. All children are treated with respect and as individuals. They receive attentive care and engage in purposeful conversation which enables them to flourish. The childminder's home is welcoming and resources are made accessible for children to make individual choices about their play. She successfully supplements play with planned activities within the farm environment. The childminder take effective steps to ensure resources and the environment are sustainable. She regularly checks the resources and purchases additional resources as required.

The childminder has good partnerships with parents and carers. She develops a good shared knowledge of the best ways to meet each child's individual needs. For example, parent's views about their child's needs and interest are verbally sought when they join. This enables the childminder to build on what is already known. Parents receive a parent pack which contains a good range of information about the service provided. Settling-in arrangements are flexible to meet the needs of the parents and children. Verbal discussions are shared at drop-off and pick-up times and parents have regular opportunities to review their child's observational record scrape book. Parents comment positively about the care and learning provided.

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

Children are happy, settled and enjoy being in the childminder's care. They are offered a variety of play opportunities that support them in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Observational scrape books contain a good range of written descriptions and photographs of the children's achievements. However, this information is not always checked against the requirements of the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and as a consequence it is difficult to fully track children's progress against the six areas of learning. The childminder uses open-ended questions to prompt children to think and draws the learning their interests and play. Relationships are warm and caring.

Children learn to take responsibility and are developing their independence; for example, they learn to dress for outdoor play and help to lay the table for lunch. They communicate with growing confidence using language to describe their experiences. Children are developing their appreciation of books, looking at those independently as well as enjoying a story by the childminder. They make marks as they draw and paint. Older children trace and are beginning to form recognisable letters. Children learn to count and solve problems. For example, children fit puzzle pieces together, weigh ingredients during cookery activities, measure the height of the sunflowers, play number games and learn to recognise different shapes within the environment. Children explore imaginarily as they paint, learn to differentiate different colours and use a variety of materials in their collage work. They use their imaginations when they play with small world resources such as the farm and act out real and imagined events. For example, children pretend to prepare meals in the caf.

Through a good range of first hand experiences children learn about the world around them. This broadens children's range of experiences well. For example, children have their own part of garden where they plant potatoes, beans, onions, radishes and strawberries. They thoroughly enjoy nurturing the fruit and vegetables as they grow and take pleasure in picking their produce. Children learn about animals, for example, the pigs and lambs. They are fascinated as they watch the chicks hatch in the incubator and handle them very carefully as they grow. Children observe change as they participate in cookery activities such as baking bread. They sledge and make snowmen in the snow and look at their shadows on a sunny day. Children create pictures using recycled materials, for example, large scale pictures made out of different coloured bottle tops. They meet different individuals as they explore the local community, celebrate festivals such as the Chinese New Year and handle a suitable range of resources which positively reflect people of other races, cultures and abilities. This helps children to appreciate out 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 respond to the childminders appropriate behaviour management strategies that take into account their age and stage of development.

This is supported by the childminder who acts as a positive role model. She encourages the children to play harmoniously together, to share and take turns.

Young children are content and settled because their health, physical and dietary requirements are well met. They are becoming aware of healthy life styles and the relevance of good hygiene practices, for example, washing their hands at appropriate times of the day. This effectively helps to prevent the spread of infection. Although children have meals which are provided by their parents, the childminder ensures that children learn about healthy eating and she encourages them to eat fruit as a snack and to take regular drinks. This promotes children's growth and ensures they remain well hydrated and comfortable. Children able to relax and rest according to their needs and have plentiful opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy daily fresh air. For example, they enjoy walks in the country side, splash in the puddles and use apparatus such as the swing and play ball games in the garden. Children engage in activities that develop hand-to-eye co-ordination, for example, children use tools such as paint brushes, pencils and spoons during baking activities with growing confidence.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	2
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	2
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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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