

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/10/2009
Inspector	Alexandra Brouder
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 1996. She lives with her husband, who is also a registered childminder, and their four children aged 15, 12, 10 and one, in a quiet cul-de-sac in Northamptonshire. The ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years, including three in the early years age range and a maximum of six children when working with her husband, all of who can be in the early years age range. There are currently nine children under the age of eight on roll, including seven in the early years age range, all of who attend on a part-time basis, with the exception of one. The childminder is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for older children.

The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The needs of all children are routinely met through recognising the uniqueness of each child as the childminder takes into account their individual needs and provides an inclusive environment in which all children are valued. She works closely in partnership with parents to establish their starting points in learning and is beginning to use the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure that children make effective progress. She has a good overview of what children need to learn and the value of practical play and first hand experiences. Children's welfare is promoted, including the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures, through robust records, policies and procedures. The childminder is committed to improvement and plans for the future are well targeted to bring about further improvement to the provision and outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles and match observations to the expectations of the early learning goals
- develop further the use of self-evaluation systems to highlight priorities for improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment in which they feel safe and supported well. Effective systems are in place to safeguard children and the childminder has completed up to date training in this area to ensure that that she is fully aware of possible indicators of abuse and how to respond to this. All adults in the household are suitable and safe to be in the proximity of children, protecting them from harm and the childminder is aware of her duty to ensure that this remains so. Clear risk assessments are in place and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that all things which children come into contact with are safe and free from potential hazards. All policies and procedures are well maintained and complement the service that is offered to parents and carers of minded children.

The childminder makes good use of the available space to provide a welcoming and attractive environment for children. She arranges the toys and resources well in all accessible areas, enabling children to make choices and become independent in their learning. For example, a child was observed to dress-up using a chosen helmet and use a toy broom as a sword as they played. Thus developing their imagination and creativity. The childminder is beginning to establish links with other settings that also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children in her care, enabling her to look at what children are doing in other settings so that she can extend on their experiences within her home. Systems for monitoring and self-assessment are developing, however, this is not yet robust to ensure that all areas are consistently covered or prioritised in ways to further improve the quality of provision for all children.

Children are valued as individuals and the childminder takes time to speak with parents before children begin to establish starting points in their learning as well as establishing children's daily routines, medical needs and any dietary issues. Relationships with parents are very good, and the childminder takes time to talk with parents each day and share informal and written feedback on their child's progress and how they have been in her care, as well as any relevant information from home. This enables the childminder to have a secure understanding of events that impact on children's lives. For example, as she converses with children about their weekend and naming the family and pets that they have spent time with, helping the children feel secure. The childminder is beginning to reflect on her practice and seeks the views of parents through discussion and asking for feedback on her service.

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

Children's personal, emotional and social skills develop well as they greet the childminder and their peers by name, and engage quickly in their chosen play when they arrive at the setting. For example, children were observed to excitedly enter the setting, chatting to the childminder about their morning, asking when they could have lunch and begin to play with the range of accessible resources in

the play room. They behave well and listen well to the childminder when she gives them gentle reminders, for example, not to run in the house as they may get hurt, or to remember to tidy the resources away before getting other things out. Children's awareness of the world they live in is promoted well as the childminder learns about the needs of all in her care, and ensures that children have opportunities to feel secure and valued in their own environment. For example, she uses familiar words that children may recognise and picture cards to enable children to talk about what they see. In addition to this, children freely access books, dressing-up and take part in activities that link to a range of festivals, helping them to learn about different cultures, lifestyles and abilities.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to support and enhance children's learning, enabling her to plan and provide opportunities for children to learn and develop across the six areas of learning. Children play well in the child friendly environment, are independent and self select toys and resources on a regular basis. For example, children were observed to freely access the farm animals and fence pieces to make themselves a farm. Although the childminder knows the children well and observes what they do, systems are not yet formalised to ensure each child's achievements, interests and learning styles are matched to the expectations of the early learning goals. This makes it difficult to set challenges or targets appropriately for individuals at times.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are very good. The childminder engages children in conversation in all that they do asking them open ended questions, to encourage them to think about what they see and do. For example, as children were colouring pictures of characters with letters linked to them, the childminder was asking the children if they recognised the letter and if they could think of other things that began with these letters. Although children could not, the childminder gave them lots of examples, enabling the children to think about this and learn new words and begin to associate letters with sounds. Children freely access books and spend time looking at these independently and with the childminder. Their ability to create and use their imagination is promoted through good access to a range of role play items, small world equipment and free access to musical instruments. They express themselves well as they engage in free painting, sticking and drawing. In addition to this, they love to sing and were observed to bang the drums and bash the Glockenspiel whilst singing a range of familiar nursery rhymes. They are happy to change their character as they dress up in a range of outfits such as a fire fighter, police officer and action hero. Consequently, children are establishing a good basis for their future skills and learning.

Children's awareness of health and safety develops well within their daily routines, for example, through the provision of healthy snacks such as fruit, cereals and toast. Meals that children have are provided by the parents; the childminder talks to them about what should be in the children's lunch boxes and what she offers for snacks, ensuring that children are consistently offered healthy foods. The childminder helps the children to learn about road safety and ensures that all children in her care wear high visibility jackets when out and about, explaining the reason for this to them. Children have very good hygiene practices as they wash

their hands before and after snacks and after using the toilet and messy play. They independently use tissues to blow their nose and know that these go in the bin after use. Children handle small tools and objects well as they turn pages on books, hold pencils appropriately and manipulate small items for sticking. In addition to this, the childminder talks about children using a range of large equipment, such as swings and slides at the park as well as bats, balls and hoops in the rear garden.

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

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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