

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	255988
Inspection date	10/03/2011
Inspector	Lindsey Cullum
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 1999. She lives with her husband and their two children, aged 16 and 13 years, on the outskirts of the town of Holt, in Norfolk. The whole of the ground floor of the property, plus one bedroom and a bathroom on the first floor, is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools.

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 regularly works with an assistant. When working together they may care for a maximum of six children, all of whom may be within the early years age range. There are currently 11 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, most of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification and is a member of the National Childminding Association and local childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder offers exceptional provision for children within the Early Years Foundation Stage. She is skilled in meeting children's individual needs and adapts activities sensitively to ensure that all children experience exciting, stimulating and challenging play experiences. Excellent partnerships are developed with parents and effective systems are in place to link with other providers in order to consistently support children's learning. A detailed, ongoing process of internal review, including the views of parents and children, provides the childminder with a realistic view of her own provision and she successfully targets priorities for future development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- strengthening the partnerships with other childcare providers and professionals associated with children in order to further promote consistency in children's care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very good understanding of her role in safeguarding children and is confident to put procedures into practice where necessary to protect children. She ensures that all adults living within the household and her assistant has undergone the required vetting procedures and that children are exceptionally well supervised. Children's safety is given extremely high priority. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out on all areas of the home, the resources and equipment to ensure children's safety and well-being at all times. Furthermore, thorough risk assessments are undertaken before outings which enable the children to take part in an exciting range of activities including trips to local parks, the beach, woods and local pre-school activity sessions, with their parents being assured risks have been considered and reduced accordingly. Considerable care has been taken within the setting to accommodate children's play and to provide them with a safe, secure and welcoming environment. The home is extremely child-centred and planned to stimulate and inspire learning. An extensive range of high quality, accessible resources promotes children's independence and they readily engage in activities of their own choosing. Stimulating outdoor play opportunities are offered in the garden with a substantial range of age appropriate outdoor equipment easily accessible to children.

The childminder is well qualified and experienced, maintaining her ongoing professional development by frequently attending training and applying what she has learnt. She works closely with an assistant, enabling her to provide a flexible service and high adult to child ratios, so children benefit from considerable periods of individual time and attention. The childminder is highly motivated and committed to providing the best support for children and their families. She has developed an effective method to monitor and evaluate her provision to secure ongoing improvement and promote better outcomes for children.

The strength of the partnership with parents contributes considerably to the quality of the care the children receive. Comprehensive information about the childminder's practice informs parents prior to the commencement of care. Parents feel valued and welcomed. They are extremely happy with the provision and state their children are keen to attend, enjoy the 'family atmosphere', play with a huge variety of toys and are making very good progress. Parents are regularly consulted and their views are appropriately responded to. Parents are given feedback both verbally and through the children's 'special book' which include photographs and examples of children's work to help keep them fully informed. Dairies are also used as an additional aid to excellent communication. The childminder is establishing effective links with other provisions and childcare services children attend in order to promote consistency in children's care and learning.

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

Children make outstanding progress in their learning and development. They are highly confident and enthusiastic learners because of the rich learning environment and the excellent relationships they enjoy with the childminder and her assistant. Children benefit considerably from the individual time and attention they receive and flourish as they frequently receive encouragement and praise. The childminder understands how to motivate children and plan activities which build on their interests across all areas of their learning. Thorough initial and ongoing assessments identify what children can do, what they like to do and what they need to progress. This information enables the childminder to support children's learning through activities which provide realistic challenges and allow children to learn at their own pace.

Children are engaged and confident to explore and try new things. For example, they relish painting activities using their hands to print, experiencing new textures and observing colour changes as they mix different colours together. They use their own imaginary ideas to create pictures of their own design. A wealth of resources are accessible encouraging children to be freely creative and examples of their work are thoughtfully displayed, promoting a strong sense of belonging. Children initiate their own imaginary games with small figures, enjoy dressing up and role play. A varied range of musical instruments are frequently used during song times and children delight in playing along as they sing. The childminder sensitively supports children as they try new challenges, such as playing the triangle by guiding children to hold the handle and giving simple instructions. Children listen intently to stories. A wealth of props such as puppets and song boards help to make stories and songs come alive. For example, children enthusiastically join in 'Old MacDonald had a farm', singing the words and making the animal sounds. Children begin to recognise numbers displayed in posters and learn to count during everyday activities, such as singing number rhymes or counting how many paints they have used. The childminder skilfully encourages children's emerging language and provides excellent opportunities for children to join in conversations and share their ideas. Children learn to think and understand for themselves, inspired by the childminder's open-ended questioning. Children find out about the living world as they grow produce to eat as part of their meals, go on outings to the local woods or nearby beach and take part in adult-led themed activities such as the current topic on spring.

Children are taught consistent and thorough hygiene routines. They wash and dry their hands at appropriate times with little prompting from the childminder and know that washing their hands removes germs. Children are provided with individual towels and bedding to prevent cross-infection and the childminder follows excellent hygiene practices. Well presented information informs parents as to what illness would exclude their child so that all children and adults in the household remain healthy. Children develop a positive attitude to exercise as they have daily opportunities to develop large physical skills both indoors and outside. They demonstrate their increasing physical skills as they find different ways to climb the climbing frame to the slide. Children energetically run, balance and ride

small wheeled toys, moving with increased co-ordination. Most meals and snacks are provided by the childminder and the children sit around the table and enjoy healthy, well-balanced, home-cooked meals. An excellent and varied range of fruit is always provided and children are encouraged to try new flavours. Drinks are accessible to children throughout the day and they confidently help themselves, ensuring they remain well-hydrated. Children gain a valuable awareness of how to keep themselves safe as the childminder provides them with gentle reminders and clear explanations. The childminder raises children's understanding of fire safety during regular practice evacuations, of road safety on outings and of safe practices whilst in the home.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They develop very close relationships with the childminder and each other. Children interact well, share resources, take turns, play co-operatively and show care and respect for each other. The childminder is an excellent role model and as a result, children feel valued and develop positive self-esteem and empathy for others. Children all make progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points because the childminder ensures they are well integrated and the resources are suitable and easily accessible.

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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