

Childminder report

Inspection date:

15 May 2025

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Standards in this setting have not been maintained following previous enforcement action. Safeguarding arrangements are not robust. For instance, the premises are not suitably clean and hygienic for the provision of childcare and risk assessments are not well embedded. This has an impact on children's health and safety.

The childminder takes children on regular outings to support children's knowledge of the heritage of their local area. Children benefit from visiting a range of local attractions, such as museums and public gardens. However, the overall quality of education is still not at a good standard. Weaknesses in planning for children's next steps, mean that activities are not always pitched at the right level to best support babies and toddlers. As a result, the progress babies make in these activities is limited. Furthermore, staff do not thoughtfully plan how best to settle children into the setting. For instance, there is an over reliance on screen time to calm unsettled toddlers and distract them from crying. As a result, these children do not have enough opportunity to develop strong bonds with staff and are not supported well enough in their communication and language skills.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Safeguarding policies are not fully understood by all members of staff. The childminder does not ensure that they have a full understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation. This means that the correct procedures in reporting concerns about others practice may not be followed. This does not ensure children's safety.
- The childminder has not maintained standards which were addressed following previous inspection and enforcement activity. This includes requirements relating to hygiene, risk assessment and safeguarding policies. This means that the evaluation of her setting is weak and does not indicate that the childminder is able to make and sustain improvements.
- The childminder has also not addressed weaknesses in the quality of education, nor provided enough support for children's individual needs. This is particularly evident for children who require additional support. The childminder is undertaking additional training and development programs, however improvements are not being made rapidly enough. There is an impact on the quality of children's experiences and their development as a result.
- The childminder does not ensure that she offers supervision sessions to support and develop staffs skills to raise the quality of interactions to a good standard. Although further external training has been provided, this is not yet having enough impact on children. For instance, the childminder has not ensured that staff have received enough support to understand the intended curriculum. As a result, they are unsure of how to best support children's individual needs.

- Hygiene practices in the setting are poor. For instance, a cat litter tray containing a significant amount of cat faeces is stored in the kitchen, along with multiple bowls of cat food. The smell of the cat faeces is noticeable in the areas where children are cared for. Furthermore, the areas of the home where children play are not clean enough. This includes the sofas and playmats. This does not provide a suitably clean and hygienic environment for children to play and learn.
- There is not a robust culture of risk assessment in this setting. For instance, items such as batteries are not stored safely. Children are not always closely supervised when they play near the cats, including during times when cats display agitated behaviours. Kittens are not prevented from interacting with babies and toddlers while they eat. This does not minimise the risk of cats injuring or transmitting infections to children.
- There is not enough support for young children to develop their early communication skills. For instance, toddlers watch nursery rhyme cartoons on the television. Although the childminder joins in and sings, the effectiveness of her interactions is minimised due to the barrier created by the television. As such, toddlers are not able to develop key skills such as making eye contact or back and forth interaction with the childminder.
- Although the childminder broadly assesses children's areas for development, the support provided is not broken down into small enough steps. As a result, activities are not effectively delivered. For instance, to support fine motor development, mark making tools are provided for babies who do not yet have the understanding or skills to use them. As a result, they quickly lose interest in the activity. The lack of a clear sequence in planning for children's learning limits the progress children make, as well as having an impact on their developing attitudes to learning.
- During the course of the inspection it was found that the childminder has not informed Ofsted of changes which must be notified to Ofsted. This is a further breach to requirements and highlights weaknesses in the leadership and management of the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is not an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action.

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
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ensure that all members of staff have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures, including a full understanding of the process to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff	30/05/2025
improve procedures to evaluate and improve your setting, ensuring that the provision meets children's needs and promotes their good development, safety and happiness	30/05/2025
provide assistants with training, supervision and support that raises the quality of care and education	30/05/2025
ensure that all areas of the provision are suitably clean for the provision of childcare and comply with food hygiene requirements	30/05/2025
implement robust risk assessments, to ensure all potential hazards are identified and that exposure to risks is minimised	30/05/2025

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage, the provider must:

	Due date
embed frequent opportunities for babies and toddlers to practice and develop their early communication and language skills	30/06/2025
improve the sequence of the curriculum, to ensure that planning is sharply focussed on supporting children's development.	30/06/2025

Setting details

Unique reference number	2655755
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10405642
Type of provision	Childminder
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childminder
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 8
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	18
Date of previous inspection	12 August 2024

Information about this early years setting

The childminder registered in 2021 and lives in the Belmont area of Durham. She operates all year round from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday, except for bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder closes for two weeks at Christmas. The childminder holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6. She works with an assistant.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Dani Taylor

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The childminder and the inspector discussed how the childminder organises their early years provision, including the aims and rationale for their early years foundation stage curriculum.
- The childminder showed the inspector around the premises.
- Children communicated with the inspector during the inspection.
- Assistants spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector observed the interactions between assistants, the childminder and the children.
- The childminder and the inspector carried out a joint observation during snack time.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The childminder provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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