

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/04/2010
Inspector	Carys Millican
Type of setting	Childminder

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her husband and adult family on the outskirts of Hethersgill, approximately 12 miles north east of Carlisle and eight miles from Longtown. Minded children have access to the whole premises except the childminder's bedroom. The utility, garden and conservatory are available for access only. A second lounge is used as a playroom. The childminder takes children on regular short walks in the locality and to a local nursery. There is a pet dog to which minded children will have occasional contact. The childminder has use of a car for transporting minded children on outings, and to and from school or nursery. Children have supervised contact with the farm animals within this small holding.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time; no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. There are currently eight children on roll, all of whom attend a variety of sessions. Three of these children are in the early years range.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children have fun playing in this warm and welcoming, safe and secure environment where they are well cared for by an experienced childcare practitioner. Children are confident and self-assured as they access a selection of resources and activities that meet their interests and reflect their family backgrounds. Children make suitable progress and their unique attributes and abilities are recognised by the childminder through visual observation and assessment. The required documentation, policies and procedures are in place, and these are implemented well to safeguard children. Children benefit from the positive relationships established with parents. Links with other settings and systems, to evaluate the practice and ensure continuous improvement, are not established.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop systems for self-evaluation in order to help to promote continuous improvement to the provision and outcomes for children
- develop systems for observing, assessing and planning for children's individual needs and to identify children's next steps to inform future planning
- develop systems with other settings children attend in order to complement

the learning taking place and develop systems to encourage parents' involvement in their children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and protected through the effective practice implemented by the childminder. She has a good understanding of key issues regarding child protection and regularly updates her knowledge by attending refresher training. She can clearly explain what actions she should take if she had concerns regarding the welfare of a child in her care. All suitability checks are completed for every adult living on the premises, and the required documentation is in place and accurately maintained. Children are closely supervised at all times, both indoors and outdoors. Their safety is promoted and potential hazards are identified and minimised. Risk assessments are completed for all the indoor and outdoor areas used by the children, and for the numerous outings they undertake.

Children play in a homely environment where they can independently make informed choices and decisions about their play. They can access a wide variety of toys and resources which meet their interests and reflect their individual backgrounds. The childminder has an appropriate understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance and how children learn through play, and this is effectively led by children's interests. Children's unique attributes and individual needs are recognised by the childminder, and they feel valued. Children have access to a selection of resources that help them understand the differences and diversity in the world around them and that reflect their own background and community.

Children benefit from the positive relationship developed with parents. Parents express a high regard for the care and service the childminder provides. Questionnaires completed by parents state 'the kind and caring' nature of the childminder and refer to the 'friendly and relaxed, homely environment' she provides. Parents are provided with some information about her everyday activities and practice. Consents are maintained, the business arrangements are recorded and a set of policies is available. There are limited written records available for parents to contribute to, apart from 'All about me' sheets that are completed on registering. These detail children's individual needs and interests. There is no information provided for parents on how they can help with their children's learning at home, and links have not been established with other settings children attend.

The childminder is a dedicated and committed practitioner who updates her own professional development by attending core training. Although no self-evaluation systems are in place, the childminder is clear on her responsibility to establish effective systems to monitor the effectiveness of her provision. Through discussion, she is clear on her strengths and areas for improvement, and the previous recommendation from her last inspection has been completed.

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

Children enjoy themselves. The childminder focuses on providing a fun learning environment in which children feel valued and their confidence is promoted. The childminder knows the children well and follows their interests. She has a copy of the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance and has an appropriate understanding of its content. However, she does not observe, assess or plan for the next steps in children's learning or progress. The childminder constantly asks the children what they would like to do and they confidently reply. Children enjoy creative activities using paper and scissors whereby they competently cut out simple shapes for a collage. The children's finished collage and their other pictures are creatively displayed on the playroom wall.

Children show a keen interest in the farm. They talk about the lambs and ewes as they look at them in the field. They enjoy collecting eggs and feeding the ducks. Children are fascinated at how the frog spawn has grown in the bucket and they want to cuddle the new kitten following them in the garden. Children enjoy playing with toy tractors and trailers. They construct train tracks, competently connecting the pieces. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in, repeating words and recognising the numbers on the clock. They play skittles indoors in the hallway practising their hand eye coordination as they stand them up and knock them down again and again.

Children develop a close relationship and a strong bond with the childminder. They relate well to her and follow her instruction. Children are well-behaved. They form friendships with their peers and play well together. Their behaviour is managed in a calm manner with the focus on positive behaviour. Children are praised constantly as they play. They learn to share and take turns in activities. Children's understanding of how to stay safe is promoted as they learn about keeping safe in the farmyard and when out walking in the community. They understand that they must hold hands and stay close to the childminder, and not to run away. Children take part in regular fire evacuation practises so that they know what to do in an emergency. They enjoy numerous outings to places of interest and experience plenty of fresh air and exercise in the garden, with visits to parks and play facilities. Children learn about good hygiene and a healthy lifestyle. They understand why it is important to wash their hands before eating, after going to the toilet and after playing outdoors. Children learn about healthy eating at mealtimes and through activities, such as sowing and growing their own vegetables, cooking and baking.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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