

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/11/2011
Inspector	Andrea Paulson
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 2001. She lives with her husband and children aged 13 and 11 years in a semi-detached property, approximately one mile from Kendal town centre. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. Accessibility to the premises is by way of steps to the front entrance and a more easily accessible entrance to the rear of the property. There is a fully enclosed yard available for outside play. The childminder is able to take children to and collect them from local schools and pre-schools. The family has a pet dog.

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. There are currently five children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage and who attend for various sessions. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to eight 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. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. The childminder has achieved the local authority quality standards for early years. She has experience as a classroom assistant and is working towards a foundation degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive as their welfare, learning and development are extremely well supported by the childminder's excellent implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The consistently high level of liaison with parents ensures that children's individual needs are continuously met. Children's uniqueness is highly valued, respected and nurtured in this inclusive setting. The childminder is fully committed to driving improvement through extensive training and continuous effective evaluation of her practice. Partnership with parents is particularly strong and ensures that outcomes for children are fully supported. Links with other settings generally support continuity well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further the systems to ensure the provision delivered is complementary to the education and care provided in any other settings that children attend, to ensure effective continuity and progression.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are robustly safeguarded as the childminder has deep understanding and experience of how to protect children. She knows how to pass on any concerns appropriately and the comprehensive policy is shared with and signed by parents. Children are cared for in the highly safe, well-maintained and organised premises where the childminder is fully alert to any hazards and takes all measures to ensure children's safety. Rigorous systems for assessing risk, including a daily check list, ensure consistent monitoring and include consideration of a variety of outings. All procedures are in place to further ensure children's welfare, such as safe collection and regular fire drill practices. The childminder is aware that adults must be appropriately checked or fully supervised. Her exceptionally high level of training and regular access to current childcare information ensures that her practice is fully up to date. The highly motivated childminder has achieved the local authority quality standards award, which further demonstrates her strong commitment to continuous improvement. Her self-evaluation, along with regular consultation with parents, is used to reflect on her practice and plan for continuous development, such as creating the innovative outdoor area.

Children are extremely happy and settled in this welcoming setting where they move freely between rooms and select toys from the wide range available, so strongly promoting inclusive practice. The childminder knows children very well as individuals through a planned settling in period and working closely with parents. She has experience of caring for children with more specific needs and liaises with parents along with other professionals as necessary. At the same time, she ensures that the programme of activities is suitable and adapted to include each child. The childminder increases children's awareness of living in a diverse society by offering many resources that reflect the wider world. She also enables children to engage in activities and celebrations around other festivals, such as Chinese New Year.

Highly positive partnerships with parents ensure that they are very well informed about their children's achievements, well-being and development. A detailed initial profile is completed by parents with very comprehensive information about starting points, likes, dislikes and abilities. Information is exchanged daily both informally through discussion and through daily diaries which children take home. Parents are given a copy of all policies and other useful information is displayed on the notice board. The digital photographs and video displays provide an exciting record for children and parents to review and recall past activities and experiences. Parents are encouraged to look at the learning profile as these are accessible daily and provide an excellent record of activities and progress. The feedback from parents is highly positive.

The childminder meets regularly with the local childminding group and has the support of the local early years development team. She is pro-active in establishing communication with other settings that children attend or are due to move on to, such as local nurseries and schools. For instance, she keeps informed about planned topics in order to support children's continuity of learning and reflects this

in her provision. However, links to all the relevant settings are not yet at the same high level.

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

Children make excellent progress in this highly stimulating and imaginative environment where the childminder's expert knowledge of how children learn is implemented to engage each child in rich learning experiences. The effective balance of free play and adult interaction ensures children are totally engrossed and having fun. The childminder has developed clear and extremely well-presented systems for recording and monitoring progress through spontaneous and planned observations. These are used to identify children's next steps and inform individual plans to support each child. The childminder sets appropriate challenges which build on their natural curiosity, imagination and concentration. She provides a warm, welcoming and very positive home where her caring, sensitive nature and sense of humour encourage children to actively participate with enthusiasm.

Children's communication skills are extremely well promoted. Interesting activities are often based on a monthly book theme which maintains children's interest. Their level of concentration is high, for instance, as they listen to stories. Children practise linking letters with sounds and learn to recognise their names on their work and numerous photographs. Creative resources promote problem solving and reasoning during spontaneous play. For instance, children work out how to release a ball from a vertical pipe outside. Children thoroughly enjoy role play as they pretend to make a meal with play food. Much discussion takes place about sharing the food out, counting the pieces and identifying shapes and colours. Action songs support children's ability to add and subtract numbers while having fun. They enjoy many interesting creative play activities as a regular part of the daily programme. Lots of positive conversation promotes their very confident self-expression and accessible mark-making items support their pre-writing skills. Children become fascinated with nature as they collect conkers and explore the particularly imaginative outdoor area, identifying bugs. Their sensory development is supported exceptionally well with innovative play areas created by the childminder with everyday materials.

Children learn about safety as they are regularly reminded about safe play and given appropriate explanations. They understand about having regular fire drills as they dress as fire fighters and pretend to put out the fire. Children confidently carry out daily routines to promote their health, such as putting on socks to keep their feet warm. They have much fresh air and daylight as they play outdoors, walk locally and visit the park and other play centres. The children, therefore, have many opportunities to run and explore, use balls, bats and ride on tricycles to develop physical skills and enjoy active games. Children receive lots of care, attention and encouragement from the childminder who fully recognises the benefits of this in developing their self-esteem. They enjoy lots of activities which encourage working together and to consider others as they share play materials. Children are confident as they learn good manners, help tidy up and relish the warm and trusting relationships with the childminder. They experience a broader

range of social and play activities through attending groups and going on trips into the local and wider community. The childminder, therefore, lays an excellent foundation for each child's future care and learning.

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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