

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	10/11/2009
Inspector	Alison Edwards
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

This childminder registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and three children aged nine, six and two years, in a house on a residential road in a large village in the Charnwood district of Leicestershire. Minded children use the ground floor for play, with access to most of the first floor as needed. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. A dog, a rabbit and fish are kept as family pets. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years, of whom two may be in the early years age range. There is currently one child within the early years age range on roll. The childminder is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for children aged eight years and over.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Overall the childminder has a sound awareness of how to implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in order to meet children's care and developmental needs appropriately. She is warm and affectionate in her dealings with children, so helping them to feel settled and secure in her care. She recognises the importance of working closely with parents, and other professionals involved in children's care, to ensure that there is a shared understanding of each child's specific needs and interests, and of how to meet these. She makes appropriate use of some sources of local advice and support to help ensure her awareness of current childcare issues. She is in the early stages of establishing ways to assess her own childminding service and to identify how to further develop it.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- establish clearer arrangements to ask parents about any medications which their child needs to take
- ensure that the risk assessment covers anything with which a child may come into contact, with particular regard to the garden pond
- make more use of observations to plan the next steps in each child's development and regularly review their progress
- establish more systematic ways of evaluating current strengths and priorities for development within the childminding service, in order to further improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Overall there are sound arrangements to safeguard children from harm. Children are cared for in a secure, comfortable and well-maintained family home, so helping to maintain their welfare. The childminder takes a range of sensible steps to maintain their safety, such as ensuring that household chemicals and medicines are securely stored, and using a safety gate to manage access to the stairs. She has now established the systematic use of written risk assessments relating to most aspects of children's use of the house and garden, and to arrangements for outings. However, these do not yet record consideration of how children's access to the garden pond is managed. Consequently, they do not fully underpin the current practical arrangements for children's safety. The childminder has a sound awareness of what child abuse and neglect mean, and of her responsibilities in the event of any child protection concerns. She recognises and complies with requirements to ensure that any adult living in the household is cleared as suitable to be in contact with children. Records required to maintain children's health and welfare are in place. These include children's personal and family contact details, together with records of written parental consent to obtain medical treatment in the event of a serious accident or sudden illness. The childminder is clear on the requirement to obtain specific written instruction from parents to authorise the administration of medicine and has systems in place to record this should she need to do so. However, current written agreements with parents indicate that a general authorisation for the administration of any medication is sufficient. Consequently, current arrangements are not fully effective in underpinning the childminder's need to ask parents about medicines and prescriptions needed by children.

The childminder offers initial visits to prospective parents to enable them to discuss arrangements for their children's care and to go through useful written information about the childminding service. This ensures a shared awareness of these issues. She obtains essential details of each child's specific health, care and dietary needs. She also now encourages new parents to contribute their knowledge of children's individual interests, preferences and abilities to help her understand how to meet these. In addition to informal daily discussion with parents, the use of care diaries enables the childminder and parents to share ongoing information about events and experiences in children's lives, and about their changing interests and skills. The childminder has experience of working with other agencies to support the inclusion and progress of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She has attended initial training on signing and sometimes incorporates aspects of this within children's daily routines, so helping all children begin to develop some awareness of diversity.

The childminder has taken appropriate steps to address the actions required at her last inspection to meet current legal requirements. Consequently, there are now sound arrangements to meet the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage because risk assessments are now undertaken and recorded to underpin most aspects of children's safety on the premises and on outings. There is now satisfactory provision for children's learning because the childminder assesses children's current abilities within the main areas of learning, and plans

and provides activities helping to support their continued development towards the early learning goals. The childminder has also built on the recommendations identified at her previous inspection to improve arrangements to seek information from parents about children's abilities. Consequently, this helps to provide a sound shared understanding of children's starting points for their future learning. She has sought advice from local authority support staff to address a further recommendation to monitor her practice to bring about further improvements. She is currently in the early stages of establishing systematic ways of evaluating her current practice, although these are not yet fully effective in identifying strengths and priorities for future development to further improve provision for all children.

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

Young children readily begin to form a secure relationship with the childminder, for example, as they use eye contact, gesture and sounds to communicate their moods and feelings. They begin to develop the confidence to explore less familiar surroundings and experiences, for example, when visiting local toddler groups. They begin to learn what behaviour is expected of them as the childminder encourages them to share toys with other children. They begin to recognise and accept similarities and differences with others, for example as they use books including characters with different skin tones, or enjoy children's television programmes incorporating signing.

The childminder now has a sound overview of what children need to learn within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). She uses this knowledge to help her assess children's current interests and abilities within each of the main areas of learning. This enables her to provide a variety of activities and first hand experiences which generally engage children's interests, and help them establish a sound basis for their future learning and skills. For example, children show familiarity and confidence using everyday technology as they chat on toy mobile phones. They investigate how things work as they use cause-and-effect toys. They begin to gain practical awareness of mathematical ideas when concentrating on fitting different sized rings onto a shape stacker or when singing action rhymes such as 'Five Little Ducks'. Children enjoy sharing favourite books with the childminder and listening to new stories at library sessions. They begin to make meaningful marks and symbols as they create their own paintings or drawings, and start to act out their own experiences as they care for dolls in simple pretend play. However, the childminder is not yet making full use of her assessments of children's current abilities to identify priorities for each child's future learning in order to offer consistently high levels of challenge and progression.

Children across the age range begin to learn how to act safely because the childminder involves them in simple discussion about how to behave safely when near roads. She makes some use of books, introducing topics such as 'stranger danger'. The childminder implements sound hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of infection and encourages children to follow these within their daily routines, for example, by washing their hands before eating. She works flexibly with parents to ensure that meals and snacks are suited to individual and family needs, whether

by the provision of packed lunches by parents or of freshly cooked main meals such as sausage and mash with vegetables. Children have frequent opportunities for energetic activities, including local walks, balancing and climbing on soft-play equipment at local toddler groups or the use of fixed equipment at local parks. Consequently, this enables them to develop their large movement skills. Young children show sound levels of dexterity as they use knobs and levers to operate different toys, or as they fit stacking toys together.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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