

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY249039
Inspection date	24/09/2008
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
Type of setting	Childminder

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder has been registered since April 2003. She lives in Darlington with her partner and her daughter aged eight years. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a large fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. She lives close to a number of local amenities including shops, parks and schools.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years. She offers a full time service, including after school care and school holidays. She is currently caring for five children.

The childminder is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She holds an National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Childcare, Learning and Development and has a Diploma in Homebased Childcare. She is also accredited with a Quality First Certificate from her local authority. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and a member of the Darlington Childminders Group.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Close partnerships with parents help the childminder to promote children's welfare and meet their individual needs, although information about children's starting points is not clearly established. Plans to maintain continuous improvement within the setting are not clearly identified. Children are happy, contented and relaxed in the childminder's company and settle easily in the warm, welcoming and inclusive environment. The childminder pays particularly good attention to promoting children's awareness of their own safety and wellbeing. Observations of children are not yet used consistently to identify the next steps in children's development. Children are safeguarded and well protected; their general welfare is enhanced through the sound practice delivered by the childminder but clear written risks assessments are not sufficiently developed to ensure children's ongoing safety within the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop written observations to identify children's individual developmental needs and to plan effectively for the next steps in their learning
- develop the ways in which parents can be more involved in assessing children's starting points and links with other agencies
- improve the procedures for self evaluation and monitoring of the provision to ensure continuous improvement.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- complete written risk assessments to ensure all risks are
- 14/10/2008

fully identified.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is committed to developing her practice through ongoing training and development. This not only updates her own understanding and development, but helps to improve the quality of service she provides for the children. The childminder has a sound understanding of her role in safeguarding children. Most of the required records, policies and procedures are implemented effectively to promote children's welfare. The childminder completes informal safety checks on a daily basis to help to ensure that children are kept safe. However, written risk assessments are not established in line with the changes within statutory guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder explains why rules are needed, recognising the importance of involving children actively in managing their own safety. Activity planning includes trips to the local fire and police stations to help raise children's awareness of keeping themselves safe. Children also practise the emergency evacuation procedure on a regular basis.

Information is shared appropriately with parents and they are invited to contribute some information about what they know about their child's needs and interests. However, the childminder is not as knowledgeable about children's starting points in order to plan for their future development effectively. Parents express a high regard for the childminder and the inclusive service she provides. They are provided with a wealth of information about the early years provision. This is ongoing through the use of a daily 'learning journal' where children's achievements are recorded. The childminder has established good settling-in procedures for children which include visits to the child's home prior to the placement. Consideration is given within daily routines, such as the school run, to the individual needs of younger children. However, the childminder has not yet developed secure links with other settings to share basic information about the wider experiences of children she cares for.

The childminder demonstrates that she is able to make necessary improvements as she has significantly improved most policies and procedures within the setting. This contributes to effective organisation and better outcomes for children. However, systems for self evaluation of the provision to ensure continuous improvement are not sufficiently robust.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. She is sensitive to individual needs and parents receive both written and verbal feedback. This helps children to develop a good sense of security and belonging. Children benefit from the caring and affectionate relationship they have established with the childminder, as babies snuggle comfortably into her when they are hungry and tired. The childminder has a sound understanding of child development and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework and practice guidance. She is beginning to

reflect this in her practice. She has begun to make simple, written observations of what children do and enjoy. However, she is not using these effectively to plan the next steps in children's learning and development. Children are provided with appropriate toys and equipment that support their individual development and progress towards the early learning goals. Resources are stored at a low level so that children can initiate their own independent choice and decision making during the day.

Children enjoy a variety of activities each day, increasing their confidence as they visit local groups to socialise with other children. The childminder uses these visits to give children more access to exploratory and creative activities, such as painting, sand and water play. In addition, children enjoy designing cards, decorating mugs and baking cakes when they are indoors. Children have regular opportunities for physical activity and begin to understand the benefits of keeping healthy and active through play opportunities and general discussions with the childminder. They enjoy regular visits to the park to use large play equipment. Children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, for example they choose what fruit they want and the filling for their sandwiches. They are also encouraged to join in and learn about taking turns and sharing, which promotes their personal, social and emotional development. Children enjoy using their imagination with small world toys, pretending to 'make the dinner'. They also like to investigate objects with binoculars having fun as they discover toys can seem larger and smaller.

Children are kept very safe and healthy as the childminder has clear systems in place to meet their needs. Children are helped to begin to learn skills that will help them in future life to secure economic wellbeing. For example, she encourages them to explore their environment and to make choices about their learning preferences so promoting independence. They begin to understand about risks and dangers, for example, as they think about road safety during their walk to and from school each day, and learn safe practices as they use the large play equipment in the park. Rules are reinforced consistently in everyday routines, so that children clearly understand expected behaviour.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Satisfactory
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Satisfactory
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Satisfactory

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Satisfactory
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Satisfactory
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Satisfactory
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Satisfactory
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Satisfactory

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.