

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY264694
Inspection date	27/01/2011
Inspector	Valerie Block
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 2003. She lives with her husband and three young children aged seven, eight and ten years in Lancaster. All areas of the house are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is able to take children to and collect them from local schools and pre-schools. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years of age at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently three children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. She offers childminding on weekdays throughout the year.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register and she is a member of the National Childminding Association. She provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The childminder is a qualified teacher and has worked in various childcare settings with children aged from birth to 14 years. She holds Early Years Professional Status and is a member of a local childminding network. Advice, support and training are sought from the local authority development team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Each child's unique personality and needs are known very well and catered for exceptionally well in this highly effective setting. There are extremely good systems in place to ensure children make excellent progress. Good relationships are fostered with parents and others to enable excellent communication for the benefit of the children and their families. The childminder has an excellent attitude and driving ambition for continuous development. Challenging improvement plans are made and regularly reviewed using robust self-evaluation methods.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- reviewing the risk assessment to consider action to take to reduce the risks to children from accessible sharp knives in the kitchen.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well-safeguarded due to the detailed, robust safeguarding procedures in place. The childminder is very competent and confident in

safeguarding children as she receives regular training in this area and ensures she keeps up-to-date with required protocols. Excellent policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and are shared with parents effectively. Children's safety and security is given high importance to ensure that very robust health and safety systems are in place to protect children's well-being. There is a minor outstanding risk to children, however, that has not been noted. Children could possibly access sharp knives stored in a wooden block on a kitchen bench.

The childminder has provided a wonderfully vibrant, interesting play environment for children where they can help themselves to a wealth of interesting play equipment and activities that really promote their desire to learn. She has developed systems to make all activities and play materials accessible for children to choose from. She has creatively considered how to give non-verbal children choices. She has a board with photographs of stored toys and different types of play, such as outdoor places to visit, for children to point at to show their choices. Children therefore develop confidence and an enthusiastic interest in the world around them. She makes excellent use of resources available to her, such as training opportunities, support from local agencies as well as toy and book libraries and outdoor play areas.

Self-evaluation is a continuous, robust process and fully uses information, suggestions and advice from all parties. Being part of the local childminding network, the childminder receives quality assurance visits that also help her to recognise areas for improvement and make challenging plans for future improvement. Although highly qualified, she continues to look for further training to enhance her performance. Since the last inspection, the childminder has increased the quality of her performance by completing the Early Years Professional Status training.

Partnership with parents is exceptionally strong. Parents comment on the excellent service they receive from this outstanding childminder in questionnaires and letters. The childminder shows great respect for parents' views and wishes and works very hard to ensure they are kept well-informed about their children and her setting. Photos of the children at play are shown on a digital photo frame to keep parents informed about the children's time at the setting. Very effective partnerships have been established with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage so both parties have very robust information about children to enable them to meet their needs very well.

The childminder is very conscientious about identifying any special educational needs children have and works with all relevant parties to overcome any obstacles to the children's progress and well-being. She employs a clear, rigorous anti-discriminatory policy in her work and strives to make everyone welcome.

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

Children make impressive progress as the childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and very skilfully encourages children's learning. She has developed exceptional observation and assessment methods to identify children's next steps in learning. Activity plans are driven by this information and by an excellent understanding of children's interests. She introduces inspiring activities and motivates children's enjoyment and learning through her own great enthusiasm for life and learning. She has great interest in outdoor play and she plays with the children in the woods on the way home from school every day. Her training in outdoor play and the natural environment have been used well for children's benefit. Through these activities, children also learn to enjoy physical exercise and keep healthy. Children feel very safe and form excellent, warm relationships with their peers and with the childminder and her family.

They learn about keeping themselves safe as the childminder strives to include them in risk assessments of their environment. For example, in the freezing weather she helps children to think about the risks of playing outside and how to overcome the problems and keep safe. The children cooperate very well and are very well-behaved. The childminder herself is very polite and thoughtful to others, showing children a good model of behaviour. Children are encouraged to talk to one another and solve their own points of conflict with her support.

Children display extremely high levels of confidence and self-esteem as they make choices and play exceptionally well independently and with their peers. Children actively participate in stories and listen enthusiastically. They love playing with the toys associated with a story about an African child. Children talk in an animated way as they play, and language is actively encouraged by the childminder in innovative ways. She has bought small recording devices to record children's voices which they love to use. Children's interest in problem solving is enhanced as they play with rice, measuring amounts into cups for toys to eat and making sure they all have the same amount. A very attractive area has been decorated for the Chinese New Year and Chinese bowls and artefacts are available to stimulate children's interest in another culture. Children thoroughly enjoy being outside in the garden playing in the sand and using child-sized watering cans to water the plants. They decide to fill wheelbarrows with water to wash the dinosaurs that are outside. In the summer they grow vegetables and fruit that they have for snacks and meals. They are learning about recycling as they use compost bins and help recycle waste. The childminder asks them to recall events in the garden when there was snow and ice. Children show great wonder and excitement as they enthusiastically talk about putting glitter on the ice to watch it shine and how they made ice decorations for the trees.

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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