

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY275922
Inspection date	03/03/2011
Inspector	Ann Austen
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.

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 was registered in 2004. She lives with her husband and one child aged nine years in the town of Rushden, Northamptonshire. The childminder's home is close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childcare purposes. Toilet and sleeping facilities are provided on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play and a covered outdoor play area.

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. A variation to her conditions allows her to mind four early years children. She is currently minding four children in this age group. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant and also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes children to and collects them from the local school. She attends several toddler groups on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides an excellent environment which is welcoming, nurturing and inclusive to all. Children are safe and secure and very well cared for. They thoroughly enjoy a varied programme of activities which promotes all aspects of their learning and development with success. Policies and procedures are very effective and inclusive for those children who attend. Safeguarding all children is given the highest priority. The childminder develops strong partnerships with parents and understands the importance of developing relationships with other providers and services to promote the integration of care, education and any extended service. The childminder uses self-evaluation to reflect on her practice.

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 systems to ensure that reflective practice continues to identify strengths and priorities for development and that the targets set to achieve continual improvement are effectively implemented.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is given the highest priority. This is because the childminder has a comprehensive understanding of her role and responsibility with regard to protecting children in her care. For example, the childminder is fully conversant with the indicator signs of abuse and the procedures to follow to report concerns. Policies and procedures are in place to support her practice. The childminder supervises the children very well and her detailed written risk assessments ensure that reasonable steps are taken to minimise hazards in the home and on outings. For example, the premises are secure, a safety barrier prevents children from accessing the kitchen and a guard ensures that children do not have access to the fire. Consequently, children move around safely and independently and are fully able to develop their play and ideas in a safe environment. The childminder has up-to-date first aid knowledge. Clear procedures are in place to record and monitor any accidents and for the safe administration of medicines. As a consequence, children's health and well-being is very well promoted.

The childminder has a level 3 diploma in home based childcare. She strives to ensure that the service provided is responsive to the needs of the children and families who attend. The childminder is enthusiastic and committed to developing her performance and professional development. For example, since the last inspection the childminder has attended a range of training workshops to continue to develop her existing knowledge and skills. These workshops included training on children with additional needs, action kids, creative music, and bullying behaviours. Well-written policies and procedures are in place, for example a complaints procedure and a behaviour management and equal opportunities policy, and these reflect the ethos of the setting. Self-evaluation is used to evaluate the childminder's provision, identifying strengths and areas for development. However to date some objectives are still to be fully implemented in practice, for example, the childminder's plans to develop the children's developmental record folders.

The childminder promotes an inclusive provision. All children are treated as individuals and with the utmost respect. They receive attentive care and engage in purposeful conversation, which benefits them and enables them to thrive. The childminder is highly effective in promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development and ensures that each child receives the support they need to develop the skills to achieve, for example, language and communication skills. The childminder has a very good understanding of cultural differences and the nature and impact of discrimination and inequality.

The premises, including a covered outdoor play area, and the good quality resources are accessible and highly welcoming to all. The childminder is taking well-considered steps to ensure resources and the environment are fully sustainable. For example, the childminder uses a local resource centre, the toy library and exchanges resources with other childminders.

The childminder's relationships with parents are highly positive. This is because they develop a shared knowledge and understanding of the best ways to meet

each child's individual needs. For example, parents contribute information relating to their child's home life and information is exchanged to ensure that specific dietary needs and preferences are catered for and any medical needs are known and accurately met. The childminder actively supports parents to spend time settling their child and provides individual reassurance as required. Parents receive detailed information about the service provided, such as information about the daily routines, house rules, hygiene practices and emergency contact arrangements. They are offered copies of the childminder's policies and procedures. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's well-being and development through daily discussion and have regular access to their child's developmental record folder. They are encouraged to contribute their comments. Positive written comments from parents, thank you cards and drawings from children show they value the childminder and are happy with the service provided. Parents comment on how they 'feel welcomed and included in the family home'. The childminder fully understands the importance of establishing partnerships with other providers who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage and with external agencies or services in order to enhance children's achievements and well-being. However, to date she has not had to implement this in practice.

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

All children receive care of a consistently high standard. They make considerable gains in their learning and develop a wide range of skills that will help them in the future. Children are active learners and have opportunities to participate in child-initiated and adult-led play-based activities. They are content, settled and very happy. The childminder observes the children as they play and makes assessments of their learning and development against the six areas of learning. She successfully plans the children's next steps in their learning, building on their interests and learning needs.

Children's independence skills are very well supported by the childminder. For example, children help the childminder carry out simple tasks, independently wash their hands, help themselves to a drink and make choices and decisions about their play and activities. They are able to help themselves from low-level boxes and drawers containing art and craft materials and other resources. Children become fully engaged in their play and are learning to concentrate and persevere at their chosen activity. They smile with delight and are very proud of their achievements. Children are learning to listen and communicate with growing confidence as they describe their experiences or suggest their ideas. They look at books for enjoyment. Older children are beginning to develop their understanding of phonics and are beginning to recognise some letters within their names. Children make marks as they draw, paint and use chalk. They are developing their mathematical ideas and concepts as they complete puzzles, play shape games and weigh and measure the ingredients during baking activities. They count with growing confidence.

Through a range of well planned first-hand experiences, children are developing

their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, children build snowmen in the snow, splash in the puddles on a rainy day and lie down in the autumn leaves. They visit the forest, search for dinosaurs in the Eco Park and go on train journeys to London. Children cover apples with chocolate and thoroughly enjoying baking and decorating cakes. They note differences and change in the growth of their vegetables and flowers and take responsibility for watering and nurturing them as they grow. The children recall previous experiences, exchange news about members of their family and learn about and celebrate different cultures and beliefs such as the Chinese New Year.

Children thoroughly enjoy singing and energetically dance to music. For example, the children sing songs such as 'the wheels on the bus'. They are developing a sense of rhythm and an understanding of sound as they handle musical instruments, such as the drum, rain maker and bells. Children enjoy role play and dress up as skeletons and witches. They explore with imagination as they paint, learn to differentiate colours and use a variety of materials in their collage work. Younger children show curiosity and delight as they explore the range of sensory resources. For example, they feel the soft toys and investigate activity centres. Children smile when they press a switch which activates pop-up figures.

Consistent routines and very good adult interactions help young children to feel safe and secure and develop a sense of security and confidence in the childminder's care. They are developing an excellent awareness of safety issues and are learning to recognise and understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, younger children talk about road safety, why they need to wear a seat belt in the car, that they must not run off in the park and why they wear a sun hat and apply sun cream on a hot day. Children behave well and become aware of what is appropriate behaviour. They are polite and caring towards each other as they develop an understanding of the needs of others. Children learn to share and take turns and receive lots of support, praise and encouragement from the childminder which actively builds their confidence and self-esteem.

Young children are very content and settled in the childminder's care because their health, physical and dietary needs are very well met. Children are cared for in a clean environment and are developing an excellent understanding of the importance of good hygiene in relation to their health. For example, children become very familiar with personal hygiene routines such as washing their hands before snack time. They use antibacterial soap and have access to individual hand towels which minimizes the risk of cross-infection. Children understand that they wash their hands to remove germs. Their dietary requirements are met through close cooperation between the parents and the childminder. Children are developing an excellent awareness of healthy eating and make healthy choices at snack time. For example, they enjoy regular fresh fruit which effectively promotes their growth and development. Children know they should take on fluids as a way to maintain their health and have access to water from a covered beaker. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and thoroughly enjoy being physically active. They move spontaneously and with confidence in the available space. Children manoeuvre wheeled toys, crawl through the tunnel, play ball games, throw bean bags, slide down the slide and bounce on the trampoline in the garden. Children access the local park to use more challenging, larger play

equipment. This promotes children's coordination, control and fitness. Children handle tools such as cooking utensils and paint brushes safely, manipulate dough and post shapes into shape sorters. This develops hand-to-eye coordination and strengthens small muscles well.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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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