

Childminder report

Inspection date: 11 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are welcomed into the childminder's warm and friendly home. They show, through their smiles and eagerness to join in, that they are happy and secure in her care. The playroom is thoughtfully organised so that resources are within easy reach, allowing children to make choices and follow their interests. Books are refreshed regularly to reflect changing themes, which captures children's curiosity and encourages them to engage with new ideas.

Children benefit from a wide range of experiences that extend beyond the childminder's home. Trips to local parks, the library and soft-play sessions give them opportunities to be active, socialise and be part of the wider community. These outings support their confidence in new situations and build their understanding of the world around them.

The childminder is a positive role model who sets high expectations for behaviour and learning. She consistently models polite language and reinforces good manners. For example, she rephrases requests so that children hear words such as 'please' and 'thank you' used naturally in conversation. Children respond by showing kindness and respect towards others. They take pride in their achievements, grow in independence and clearly enjoy being part of this welcoming setting. All children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The childminder plans a curriculum that builds on children's interests. For example, she links play to seasonal changes, such as providing autumn trays with conkers, pumpkins and bark alongside stories and props. This gives children meaningful experiences that connect their play to the world around them.
- The childminder promotes children's communication and language skills effectively. She models vocabulary throughout the day, repeating words back to children and encouraging them to extend their sentences. For example, when a child asks for paint, the childminder encourages her to name the colour and introduces descriptive words such as 'sticky' and 'smooth' to extend their understanding. This helps children develop clear speech, broaden their vocabulary and grow in confidence when speaking.
- Mathematical development is woven through daily play. The childminder counts with children and introduces vocabulary related to quantity and size. For example, when rolling painted conkers, she helps children count to 13 and encourages them to describe the jug as being 'too full'. This helps children to develop a secure understanding of number, counting and capacity, which prepares them well for future learning.

- The childminder skilfully provides varied experiences that strengthen children's physical skills. For example, children handle scissors and tongs with increasing control and cut fruit at snack time. This builds fine motor skills that prepare them for early writing.
- The childminder provides a broad range of engaging activities and joins in enthusiastically with children's play. She asks questions and introduces new ideas to sustain interest. At times, however, she directs play too strongly, which reduces children's opportunities to test out their own ideas. This limits children's chances to think deeply, explore independently, and develop curiosity and problem-solving skills.
- The childminder provides nutritious home-made snacks, fresh water and daily physical activity in her garden. This helps children to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and supports their physical development and well-being.
- The childminder is reflective. She keeps mandatory training up to date and uses her professional network for support. However, she does not identify specific areas for further professional development. This limits how effectively she builds on her knowledge and skills.
- The childminder builds positive partnerships with parents and values their contributions. She shares daily information about children's routines and learning and gathers feedback through regular conversations and questionnaires. Parents describe her as warm and nurturing, noting that she treats children as part of her family. They value the variety of activities and outdoor opportunities she provides. This two-way communication ensures that parents remain well informed and involved in their child's learning, which strengthens continuity between home and the setting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- extend opportunities for children to think, respond to questions and solve problems independently
- strengthen the focus of ongoing professional development to continually enhance knowledge and skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY306826
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10407608
Type of provision	Childminder
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childminder
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 3
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	5
Date of previous inspection	14 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

The childminder registered in 2005 and lives in Stockton. She operates all year round, from 8am to 5pm, Tuesday to Thursday, except for bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder holds an appropriate qualification at level 3. She provides funded early education for eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Claire Budge

Inspection activities

- The childminder showed the inspector the premises and discussed how she ensures that these are safe and suitable.
- The childminder and the inspector discussed how the childminder organises her early years provision, including the aims and rationale for her early years curriculum.
- The children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing while with the childminder.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this is having on the children's learning.
- The inspector took account of parents' written views.
- The childminder provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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