

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY318546
Inspection date	19/11/2009
Inspector	Melanie Calway
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 2001. She lives with her husband and adult son and daughter in the town of March, in Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two dogs.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from local schools and pre-schools, attends a regular weekly toddler group and goes on outings to local farms and other attractions. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and a member of the 'Children come first' childminding network. She is currently undertaking a level three qualification in home-based childcare.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well met because the childminder has a good knowledge of their stage of development. She uses her observations of their play to provide activities which will help them to progress. Parents are provided with very good information about the service and a regular daily exchange keeps them in touch with what their children have been doing. The childminder uses a range of methods to reflect on her practice and undertakes regular training to expand her knowledge.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- make better use of the outdoor area to increase opportunities for exploration and investigation of the natural world
- improve the record of risk assessment to cover everything a child comes into contact with
- develop systems to share information about children's learning and development with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) when children attend more than one setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect. The childminder has completed training on safeguarding and is aware of her responsibility to refer any concerns she may have about children's welfare. She has a clear safeguarding policy and keeps the necessary information, including the referral number, to enable her to act appropriately if she were to have a concern. The childminder has good safety awareness and supervises children well. Necessary safety equipment is in place, such as stair gates to protect children when they play indoors. The premises are secure. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the fire drill is practised at regular intervals and smoke alarms are in place and tested to check that they are in working order. The childminder carries out daily checks on her home and conducts a risk assessment which is recorded and reviewed every six months. Although the outdoor area is checked before children use it, there are some aspects of the environment, which have not been identified in the record and which need addressing, for example, a broken gate panel. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for each outing and procedures for outings have recently been reviewed. The record of risk assessment for outings does not always include all aspects of each outing. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they practise the fire drill and as they learn about road safety when they are out and about.

The childminder undertakes regular training and is currently working towards a level three qualification in home-based childcare. She uses training courses to give her ideas to improve her practice as well as membership of her local childminding network. Recent actions set by Ofsted and recommendations from the last inspection have been met, improving outcomes for children. The childminder provides a welcoming and inclusive environment with most resources easily accessible for children and with positive images of different people displayed to enable children to learn about people's similarities and differences. Policies and procedures are very comprehensive and inclusive, for example, there is a policy on how to include children who speak English as an additional language. This ensures that all groups of children can make good progress. Resources are generally deployed effectively but good use is not made of the outside area in the winter months.

The childminder provides parents with very good information about the service as all parents have copies of the detailed policies and procedures and sign the key policies to say they have read and understood them. Detailed information is obtained from parents when children start at the setting and parents have access to the observation folders. Detailed diaries are completed with children's routines, activities and any significant milestones. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the diaries and some do, while others share verbally their own knowledge of their children's development. The childminder is aware of what children are doing at other settings as parents keep her informed but she has not yet developed systems to share information about individual children's learning and development when they attend other settings delivering the EYFS to ensure effective continuity and progression.

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

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care and make good progress. The childminder uses observations of their play and learning to plan opportunities to help them to progress. The childminder obtains detailed information about them when they start and discusses their stage of development with parents so that she can build on what they can do. Observations are kept in folders with photographs and the childminder notes down the activities which will help to extend their learning. In addition detailed entries are made in the daily diaries to keep parents in touch with what children are doing and achieving on a daily basis.

Children communicate confidently with the childminder as they feel safe and secure. They chatter as they play and the childminder interacts with them to encourage their language development. Books and stories are available on demand. Writing materials are available for older children and some can write their names. Children learn how to solve problems as they play with cause and effect toys and shape sorters. The childminder supports them so that they can succeed and counts with them as they play. Opportunities are taken up to recognise letters and numerals when children are walking out. Children are taken on regular outings to local farms, play areas and attractions, such as the beach. This gives them the opportunity to learn about the world around them and also gives them access to large physical equipment which they would not otherwise experience. Older children can use the computer to become familiar with information technology. There is a wide selection of pull-along and ride-on toys, which children can move around the play area to support their developing mobility. Although some messy play, such as playing with corn flour and water is offered, the garden is only used for short periods in the winter months and this limits opportunities for messy and investigative play and for children to learn about the natural environment. Children are forming positive relationships with the childminder and with each other. Older children learn to show care and consideration for the younger ones. Positive house rules are displayed so that children know what is expected of them. They are given praise and affection to boost their confidence and self-esteem.

Children's health is promoted through regular outings and walks so they get plenty of fresh air. They enjoy a healthy snack of fresh fruit and packed lunches which are stored appropriately. The childminder talks to them about what makes us healthy to enable them to learn about a healthy lifestyle. Drinks are kept on a low table which young children can easily access to have plenty to drink. Children's routines are respected and a separate room is set up with cots so that they can sleep in comfort. Good hygiene is observed and children either wash or wipe their hands before eating. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they learn to stop, look and listen when they cross roads and when they practise the fire drill. Children learn to respect other people through resources and displays which reflect diversity and encourage children to talk and ask questions about different kinds of people. They are learning skills for the future as they progress in their learning and form relationships.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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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