

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/02/2010
Inspector	Angela Howard
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 2006. She lives with her husband and four children aged 11, seven and five years, and 21 months old at Halfway in Sheffield. The whole of the ground floor is available for childminding. The premises are accessible via a level driveway and one step to the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of three children under eight years old at any one time. There are currently five children on roll, two of whom are in the early years age group. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder organises her day to focus on the needs of each child. Children feel very secure and have good self-esteem; they confidently initiate their own play and enjoy the range of interesting activities on offer. They are making good progress in their learning in a stable, supportive and stimulating environment. Although observations are of good quality, they are not always used rigorously to guide planning. Good links with parents ensure children's progression and continuity of learning and care. The relationship with other professionals is positive, however, information is not always used rigorously to fully support children's achievements and well-being. The childminder is forward thinking and takes advantage of early years guidance and other supporting literature to begin to plan for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the observation and assessment system to include children's next steps in learning and use this information to tailor activities to deliver personalised learning
- build upon the links established with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that the education provided complements the education received at other settings.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder's knowledge in relation to child protection is good. She has robust systems in place and has ensured that her practice is underpinned with up-to-date knowledge of the correct procedures to follow should she have any concerns.

Children's safety is a high priority in the setting. The childminder is very careful in assessing potential risks and takes effective steps to prevent accidents. Clear, detailed records which are regularly reviewed and updated help to monitor this. For example, rigorous risk assessments effectively monitor any action required. This allows children the freedom to discover and learn safely. The childminder has developed a wide range of good quality policies and procedures which enable parents to understand how the setting operates on a daily basis. The environment is organised well to allow children to choose and extend their own play, developing their independence and self-esteem. The adult ratios positively support children's care, learning and development because the childminder is able to offer plenty of one-to-one care. The childminder has a good understanding of her role to promote equality and diversity, and ensures parents and children feel comfortable and able to contribute to the operation of the setting. The wide range of resources used daily to increase children's awareness of diversity help them to recognise and value similarities and differences successfully.

From the outset of a placement, the partnership with parents is given high priority by the childminder. She ensures that she promotes a system that values communication and creates a sense of belonging for both parents and children. Her open-door policy and approach enables her to build strong relationships with the children's families and ensures she understands and can plan in advance for the needs of each child. Parents praise the setting highly. Comments include 'my child is happy in her environment', 'the childminder clearly has a caring attitude and always tries her best' and 'she is flexible and very professional, I have found a person I can really trust'. Photographs, lovely wall displays and how the setting is presented each day gives them good insight into activities their children take part in. The relationship with other professionals is positive, however, the childminder is not yet able to fully demonstrate that the care and education she provides complements the education and care received at other settings. The childminder is very motivated and keen to improve outcomes for children. She welcomes advice from the local authority development workers and other childminders. The childminder has a good understanding of the strengths of the setting and areas for improvement, showing a clear sense of purpose and direction. She is committed to continuous improvement by developing her knowledge, reflecting on her practice, attending training and applying what she learns to enhance outcomes for children. She has completed safeguarding, health and safety, exploring the Early Years Foundation Stage, using observation and assessments effectively and welfare requirements training since her last inspection. All actions and recommendations made at the last inspection have been completed.

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

The childminder's knowledge of the learning and development requirements is generally good. She ensures that all children enjoy themselves and are suitably challenged. Babies use all their senses to explore different toys, stretching, pulling, pushing and squeezing different objects. Toddlers love to explore push and pull toys, build with bricks and play with musical instruments. Babies access a very wide variety of items in interest baskets, such as wooden egg cups, spoons, rings,

loofahs and sponges. Children show interest in what happens when they build a tower with small wooden blocks and squeal in excitement as it is knocked down. Observation and assessment records are of good quality and are clearly linked to the six areas of learning. They show children are making good progress relative to their starting points and their next steps are accurately identified. However, this information is not always used rigorously to plan for children's individual learning journeys. Children follow their interests with perseverance and have confidence in what they do. They show excitement at the ball moving across the floor and beam with pleasure as they shake the musical instruments when the childminder sings a song. The childminder is keen to ensure the welfare and education of children in her care is met at all times. She knows each child very well and ensures all children are able to have fun, join in and be challenged on a daily basis. Therefore, children participate fully and their behaviour is good. They respond well to the childminder and are secure and very happy in her care. Their relationship is very warm and caring and children thoroughly enjoy themselves. The childminder acts as a very good role model, listening attentively and speaking with respect. She makes children feel good about themselves by frequently providing positive support, praise and encouragement, and treats all that happens as an opportunity for children to learn. For example, she responds to babies' babbles by talking constantly to them as she passes them toys and talks through her actions, saying 'let's get your drink' and 'come on it's time for a sleep'. Babies respond by giggling, shouting out, reaching up and smiling. They beam with pleasure when the childminder praises them and are aware that they are someone special to her. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childminder's.

The childminder is proactive in ensuring children remain healthy and understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. She provides a well-balanced, nutritious range of food and has robust policies and procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. Children get plenty of rigorous physical exercise. They access some form of physical activity daily and routinely visit play areas to practise their skills in movement, balance and coordination. Outdoors they access a wide range of equipment to practise and refine their skills in pedalling, catching and kicking balls. Children love to dance and sing action songs, which helps them to develop some control of their bodies as they move in a wide variety of ways. The childminder is proactive in encouraging children to learn about being safe and what is dangerous. Documentation shows children learn about fire evacuation, safety in cars and when out walking. The environment, both indoors and outdoors, is very child-centred, providing good stimulus for free play and exploration for all who attend.

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	2
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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