

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY345204
Inspection date	02/02/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged 10 and 12 years in a Fenland town near to Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is registered for childminding although childminding predominantly takes place on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, the library, toddler groups, shops and parks. The family has two pet guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She 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. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The childminder regularly works with another registered childminder and her assistant both at her own home and theirs.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is working towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder recognises each child's individuality and effectively promotes inclusive practice so that children feel safe, secure and valued. She has established positive working relationships with parents and this ensures children's individual needs are well met. Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder deploys her resources well and provides children with a broad range of stimulating learning opportunities. Established systems for observing, tracking and planning for children's learning are in place. All of the required documentation is in place to promote and safeguard children's welfare. The childminder has effective systems of ongoing self-evaluation in place and demonstrates a firm commitment to continuously developing the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the range of evidence gathered to be able to further demonstrate the good progress children are making, this relates to developing the use of starting points, next steps and ongoing information from parents about what they know their children can do
- develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing further information about children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children procedures and has attended a relevant training course. This knowledge is underpinned by a clear policy which is shared with parents and the childminder has all of the relevant literature to support her in the event that she has concerns about a child in her care. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the premises, outdoor area and all types of outings. These risk assessments cover anything which a child may come into contact with such as the pet guinea pigs. They show that the childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding about potential risks and the action to take to minimise these. For example, a duvet is placed over the hearth to prevent children falling onto its edges. The childminder is well organised; clear documentation and good record keeping promote the safety and welfare of the children and underpin the good quality care offered.

The childminder provides an inclusive, welcoming environment where each child is valued and they are clearly relaxed and comfortable in her care. She is very aware of children's interests and individual learning needs and considers these when planning and delivering activities, thereby enabling every child to achieve. The childminder organises resources well. For example, a designated playroom gives children access to a wide range of play equipment and resources which are in good condition and cleaned regularly. This room is bright and stimulating with children's work and other stimulating posters displayed. This gives children a strong sense of belonging and shows that their contributions are valued. The childminder and children spend much time with another registered childminder and her assistant, at each other's houses. The childminder feels that this benefits the children as they receive good levels of adult attention and supervision as well as a wider variety of toys and resources. Further resources are borrowed from the toddler group and library which ensures that children have access to an ever changing range of play choices and opportunities.

The childminder works positively in partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are fully met. Clear information is gathered from parents about their child before they start so that the childminder knows children's individual interests, needs and backgrounds. A detailed daily communication book provides a way of maintaining two-way communication between the childminder and parents to ensure that they feel fully informed about their child's day. Parents receive a good range of information about the service offered. For example, they get information about up and coming topics and have access to menus. Parents are also invited to join in activities with their children such as soft play sessions. Feedback from parents is very positive, one commenting that the childminder offers 'excellent care that goes way beyond the legal requirements of a childminder'. Others comment positively about the good range of activities and places of interest visited as well as the social mealtimes. The childminder has a positive attitude towards working with other providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in her care. For example, she shares information about children's welfare. However, information specific to children's

learning and development is not yet shared to enable both settings to support a consistent learning experience for children who attend more than one setting.

The childminder is committed to maintaining continuous improvement and has attended a good range of training courses since her last inspection. She demonstrates enthusiasm for her work and is motivated to continue making changes that improve outcomes for children. The childminder has continually used the Early Years Quality Framework as an effective basis for reflecting on her practice and targeting areas to further develop. Good progress has been made since the last inspection with recommendations clearly addressed. For example, she has ensured that low level glass does not pose a risk to children's safety by covering it with protective film and has attended the 'Introduction to Childminding Practice' course in order to meet legal requirements. The childminder's confidence in her abilities and organisational skills has grown since the last inspection and she feels this has also promoted better outcomes for children.

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

The childminder has a clear understanding of children's learning needs, interests, the stage of development they are at and the aspects of development she wishes to promote next. She uses this good knowledge to support children effectively as they play and has a good understanding of how to adapt activities to meet the needs of different children. For example, during a collage activity, older children become engrossed in sticking pictures of animals next to pictures of their homes, identifying who lives where. Younger children enjoy the same activity but the childminder understands that the learning opportunities arise from the experimentation with mark-making; using spreaders and dripping glue to make patterns on their paper. This support and good understanding about how young children learn ensures that activities are meaningful to them and that spontaneous learning opportunities are not overlooked.

Established systems of observation, planning and assessment are in place, which enable the childminder to effectively plan stimulating and meaningful activities to meet individual children's learning needs. The childminder gathers a variety of evidence to demonstrate the progress children are making. However, starting points, next steps of learning and ongoing information gathered from parents about what they know their children can do, is not evidenced to demonstrate the good progress children have made whilst in the childminder's care. Planning is topic-related and covers all six areas of learning to ensure that activities are broad and balanced.

Children are very happy and settled in the childminder's care. They behave well and the younger children look up to the slightly older children, for example, as they join in their play or repeat words that they say. They have lots of opportunities to socialise with others, for example, at local toddler groups or when with other childminders and their minded children. Children become engrossed for long periods in activities of particular interest to them. They are familiar with daily routines such as washing their hands before snack and spontaneously sit down

ready to eat it. Children enjoy sharing books. They point out and match pictures that are the same, demonstrating early problem solving skills. This enjoyment is further extended by borrowing topic-related books from the library. Children's communication skills are developing well. The childminder talks to children constantly and extends their developing vocabulary by introducing new words such as 'pig sty' and 'hen coop' when talking about animal homes. She rephrases broken sentences so that children hear correct pronunciation and sentence structure without negating their attempts at speaking. Counting is filtered through into everyday activities so that children begin to hear and use number language. They learn to solve simple problems such as folding their doll's blanket up so that it does not get caught in the wheels of the toy pushchair. Children are curious and want to investigate. This is supported by the provision of a good range of sensory activities involving media such as ice, water, sand, cornflour and water mix, spaghetti and paint. They learn to grow and take care of living things such as sunflowers and plants as well as how to gently handle the pet guinea pigs 'Caramel' and 'George'. Topics such as 'Families' and a good range of toys, resources and positive images help children to begin to appreciate the diverse society in which they live. All of these simple activities begin to lay secure foundations to support children's future economic well-being.

Children enjoy regular fresh air and exercise which contributes towards a healthy lifestyle and good physical development. Regular use of local parks, the garden, soft play sessions and a nearby field to play sports and parachute activities, ensures children have good opportunities to develop a wide range of physical skills. Topics covering healthy eating include activities such as making fruit kebabs which encourages children to take an interest in healthy options. Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity through a wide range of art and craft, musical, role play and imaginative play activities.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Children are cared for in a very clean, hygienic environment and learn effectively at a young age about maintaining their own personal hygiene, such as, washing their hands before meals and snacks as well as after petting the guinea pigs. Meals and snacks provided by the childminder are healthy, balanced and nutritious and she ensures that children have access to drinks at all times. Children's specific medical needs are well catered for and documented. Children feel safe and secure and this is demonstrated through their very contented, happy and confident disposition. They begin to learn about road and fire safety through topic and role play activities. Road safety is also practised when out and about which gives them opportunities to put into practice what they have learnt through role play. Clear documentation is in place to record any medication administered and any accidents that occur. The childminder has a valid first aid certificate which ensures that she is able to deal effectively with minor injuries. Children behave very well for their age. This is due to the childminder's good understanding of age appropriate behaviour management strategies, her positive disposition and her active use of praise and encouragement.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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