

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/05/2011
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
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 lives with her husband and two children aged eight and 12 years in Milton, Cambridgeshire. She is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for no more than six children aged under eight years at any one time. She is currently looking after two children in the early years group. The childminder also provides out of school care for older children.

Children use the ground floor of the home and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder lives within walking distance of the primary school, pre-school and parks. 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.

Children are settled and content and enjoy their time in this safe and secure setting. The childminder knows the children well, which enables her to plan varied and inclusive activities based on children's interests; as a result all children make good progress. The childminder has developed good, long term partnerships with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's achievements and well being. The childminder has a keen commitment to improving the outcomes for children and has good systems in place to monitor the quality of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve accident records to ensure they are fully confidential
- develop effective links with other providers who care for the children in order to share information and improve the outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder keeps children safe from harm because she has a clear understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. Written policies and procedures are shared with parents to ensure they know about the childminder's responsibilities to safeguard children. The childminder identifies and minimises risks to children both in the home and on outings. She has clear strategies to keep children safe, for example, she ensures she is familiar with public venues before visiting with the children. Older children have firm boundaries about how far they can walk ahead as they journey to and from school. The childminding home is comfortable and welcoming with well organised, accessible resources so children can make choices about their play.

The childminder has good, long term relationships with parents and keeps them well informed about each child's wellbeing and progress. Written daily diaries for younger children help keep parents up-to-date with their children's activities and achievements. Parents indicate they are pleased with the service the childminder provides, for example they comment on the way the childminder encourages children to try new foods. Parents also say their children enjoy being out and about in their local community and that they are pleased their children attend, for instance, music groups. The childminder has a professional attitude towards her business and ensures parents complete contracts and agreements so everyone is clear about the expectations of care. The childminder keeps clear records of accidents and any administration of medication and ensures these are shared with parents, but some accident records are not fully confidential.

The childminder has built informal links with some other providers, such as the local school. However partnerships with other settings, such as the local pre-school, are not yet fully established, which potentially limits the childminder's ability to develop a holistic view of children's progress and welfare. The childminder has worked with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and therefore has the skills to support children effectively. She would work with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs. At the time of the inspection there were no children on roll who have English as an additional language; however the childminder is aware of local resources, such as the children's centre, where she could seek advice and support.

The childminder has robust systems to evaluate the provision, for example, she has completed the local authority Quality Framework. She keeps essential training, such as first aid, updated and attends courses to improve her knowledge. Since the last inspection she has worked hard to implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and has completed all the recommendations made at the last inspection. This demonstrates her capacity to continue to improve the outcomes for children.

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

Children are happy and relaxed and enjoy their time in the setting. They engage with visitors readily and show their assurance as they move around the home and independently access resources. The childminder has a consistent approach to behaviour management and applies firm boundaries, such as time out, with confidence. As a result children play together well and show good sharing behaviour. The childminder provides a broad and balanced range of activities that take into account children's ages and interests. She collects observations and takes lots of photographs to demonstrate what children can do. In partnership with parents she identifies each child's next steps to ensure they continue to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have ample opportunities to explore the local area as they visit the play areas, or feed the ducks at the nearby country park. They attend a range of

activity groups, which enables them to socialise and develop relationships with their peers. Regular attendance at a music group helps children develop their skills in marking rhythm and time and they enjoy learning new songs. The childminder helps children understand the use of numbers in enjoyable, everyday ways, for instance, they look at house numbers, count out loud and sing counting songs. Popular board games increase children's ability to take instruction and extend their concentration; they move the pieces round the board and remember whose turn it is next. Children chatter constantly, confidently asking questions; demonstrating their curiosity. The childminder promotes their language skills as she listens and responds; she encourages them to speak clearly by example and constantly praises them. This enhances their self esteem, ensuring they are motivated to try out new experiences and pursue their own learning.

Children learn to appreciate the wider world as they play with a diverse range of resources, such as books and character figures. The childminder talks to them about positive attitudes and ensures they learn about festivals and events from other countries, such as Chinese New Year. The childminder understands that gender affects the way children learn, for example, she knows active boys might not want to sit and use a pencil. Consequently she plans activities to develop their small muscle control, such as kneading dough, using chalks and paints, or pouring water and sand. Children play imaginatively, for example, as they dress up as super heroes. Electronic toys, such as a till with a bar code reader or a garage that "washes" cars with lots of interesting noises ensure children develop an aptitude for modern technology, which supports their future economic wellbeing.

Children eat healthy snacks and access drinks freely. The childminder offers a nutritious cooked lunch as well as afternoon snacks for children attending after school. They cook various foods, such as banana tea bread, which develops their interest in healthy ingredients. Good hygiene practice is introduced at an early age so children learn to care for themselves, for instance, they wash their hands after using the toilet. Children learn about safe practices, for example, they practise the fire drill regularly and learn to tidy their toys away.

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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