

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	25/02/2010
Inspector	Melanie Eastwell
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 2008. She lives with her parents in Raunds, Northamptonshire close to shops, parks, the local school and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor of the premises and one bedroom upstairs are used for childminding. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding one child in this age group. She also provides care to children aged over five years to 10 years. The childminder is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She works with another registered childminder from her home address and together they may care for a maximum of eight children. Both childminders have equal responsibility for the childminding practice.

The childminder takes children to and collects them from the local school and regularly attends the local Sure Start Children's Centre.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder and her co-worker provide a happy, welcoming environment, in which children's welfare and learning are successfully promoted. Children are safe and secure and enjoy the positive interaction from both the childminders. The partnerships with parents are effective and are significant in making sure that the needs of all children are met. This means that children progress well given their age, ability and starting points. Although the childminder is aware of self-evaluation, she is yet to implement a system to identify her priorities for future development and to celebrate areas of strong practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- devise and implement a system for self-evaluation to continue to improve on the outcomes for children
- develop further the planning of activities to ensure it is individualised to take account of each child's interests.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Both childminders have devised written policies and procedures that are clearly reflected in their activity with the children and their parents and these written documents underpin a good awareness of safeguarding issues. For example, the

childminder and her co-worker maintain separate accident and medication records that are signed by parents. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place that are regularly reviewed. Both childminders demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of following the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures in the event of any child protection concerns. Children begin to learn about keeping themselves safe. For example, they are encouraged to help to tidy away when they have finished playing and follow the good role modelling from the childminders. Children demonstrate that they feel safe in the childminder's home. For example, they are confident to select books and play materials from the low-level boxes and to approach both childminders for comfort and reassurance as they need it. Children benefit from the effective use of the available space. They thoroughly enjoy using the welcoming play room which is set out to promote free choice and independence skills and the bathroom is adjacent which also promotes the children's independence.

The childminder has built effective partnerships with the parents of the minded children. Each of the childminders takes responsibility for their own key children and therefore the partnership with their parents. Children benefit from the good communication between their parents and the childminder. Parents are kept well-informed on a daily basis about their child's routines and progress through both written diaries and verbal feedback. Children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is shared with parents. For example, information is gathered about children's achievements at home before they commence with the childminder and on a regular basis when they are settled. This information from parents is used to help the childminders identify children's starting points and to inform the planning of future activities. The children's achievement files are sent home with parents each term and they are invited to record their own comments regarding their child's progress. The childminder is fully aware of the benefits to children of working in partnership with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure a smooth transition and a consistent approach and she will implement the systems in place for developing this partnership as it becomes necessary.

Although the childminder has a sound understanding of the need to reflect on her childminding practice, she has yet to implement a system to manage this. However, she actively contributes to discussions about the successes of the day and how these can be used to build on children's skills and interests. Because activities are closely matched to their individual stages of development, children enjoy learning and make good progress in all areas. The views of the children and their parents begin to be sought through the use of the children's digital camera and letters which report very positive and highly complimentary comments from parents.

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

Children enjoy the gentle and positive interaction from the childminder who knows them all very well and understands them as individuals. She responds to their needs for alternative activities and supports them to explore their environment and

to select books and other play materials themselves. The childminder spends time engaged with the children during activities, supporting them through lots of verbal praise and encouragement as well as positive facial expressions. For example, during a sticking activity when a child is curious about the different shaped and coloured sequins they are choosing to stick on their paper hat. Children thoroughly enjoy a group activity where everyone plays 'doctors' and use a large construction toy to make a 'bed'. The children laugh together and collect a variety of pillows and blankets before settling 'the patient' and checking why they are poorly. This game is ably supported by both childminders who are fully involved and engaged with the children.

Children's achievements and progression is recorded in the same manner by both childminders who work closely with the Practice Guidance document to assist them in identifying each child's next steps in learning. Children have individual files that contain written observations under each of the areas of learning that are backed up by photographs and samples of the children's work. These files are regularly shared with parents to ensure they are involved in their child's learning and development. The childminders record written plans of activities. This planning is led by the children and generally follows their interests. However, although both childminders take account of children's individual preferences and interests they do not currently identify on the planning any activities planned for specific children and therefore the written plans do not clearly demonstrate their understanding of individualised planning for all the children present.

Children sit together to eat and tuck into meals and snacks that are prepared by the childminder following careful discussion with their parents to ensure any specific dietary requirements are managed effectively. Children begin to learn to manage their own personal hygiene. They demonstrate that they are familiar with the routines for washing their hands before eating and after messy activities. Both childminders follow effective procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection during nappy changes. Children begin to develop an awareness of diversity and individuality. For example, they are well supported by the childminder to work together, to take turns and to share. Through discussion with the childminder children are able to use their words to manage situations that arise. They show care and concern for each other. For example, they ask their friends to come and join a game of pretend shopping. Both childminders are very attentive to the children and promote good behaviour through implementing effective behaviour management strategies that are appropriate for the children's ages. Children enjoy learning about the wider world through activities such as recently celebrating Chinese New Year and Pancake Day. The appropriate and well-resourced activities alongside discussion with the childminders begin to develop children's awareness of diversity.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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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