

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/12/2009
Inspector	Andrea, Jane Lockyer
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 has been registered since July 2009. She lives with her husband and two children in a house in the Bedlington area of Northumberland. Local amenities and public transport systems are within walking distance. The whole of the ground floor area is used for childminding purposes. Children do not access the first floor. There is an enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children, and is currently caring for four children. All of whom attend on a part-time basis and are in the early years age range. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and she receives support and training opportunities from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a stimulating, caring and inclusive environment where their individuality is respected and valued. Effective relationships with parents ensure that the childminder is fully aware of children's individual needs, which she meets very well. Links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are beginning to be established. She has a good understanding of the EYFS and how to implement it effectively to ensure children make good progress in all areas of learning. Children access a wide range of resources to stimulate their interest in learning, but there are limited natural materials for younger children to fully explore their senses. The childminder is committed to improving her practice and she evaluates her provision effectively to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's development files and be involved in their children's observation and assessment process
- further develop the range of natural resources readily available for younger children to fully explore their senses
- develop effective links with other provisions that children attend who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity in children's care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety remains a high priority at all times. The childminder has a good understanding of child protection issues, to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. A comprehensive written procedure shared with parents ensures that they are made fully aware of the childminder's role and responsibility. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because effective safety procedures and risk assessments are implemented by the childminder, both indoors and outdoors. A well organised, safe and secure environment ensures children are able to explore their environment freely and safely. Effective procedures followed by the childminder result in children being protected from illness and the spread of infection. Premises are made warm and welcoming to both children and parents. All children have easy access to a wide range of well maintained toys and resources, promoting their independence and choice. Children are able to move freely between the garden and indoors in good weather.

The childminder promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, resulting in all children feeling valued and free from discrimination. Children learn to value differences through sensitive discussions and are receptive to the childminder's good role modelling. They have access to a good range of play materials and resources through their everyday play, which raise their awareness of the diverse society in which they live.

Effective partnerships with parents have a positive impact on children's overall well-being. Good written and verbal communication ensures parents are kept very well informed of all aspects of the childminding practice, and the care, welfare and progress of their children. Parents are provided with a comprehensive information package, which includes copies of a wide range of detailed policies and procedures. Children's development files are shared with parents and they are able to view these when they want to. However, they have not been invited to contribute to their children's files or be involved in the observation and assessment process. Daily written diaries are effectively used as a two-way flow of information, which both parents and childminder make comments in. The childminder has not yet fully implemented links with other providers delivering the EYFS to fully support continuity of care.

The childminder is committed to improving her practice. She reflects on her provision effectively and has clear targets for future improvement, such as, developing outdoor activities to provide a richer learning environment for children, and attending further training. She constantly researches different media to gain information about a variety of childcare issues and provide children with interesting activities. She is currently undertaking a National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Childcare and Education.

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

The childminder has developed close and caring relationships with children. She provides a gentle warmth and kindness, which enables children to develop a sense of security, trust and self-esteem. Young children instinctively reach out to her when they are unsure of strangers and become upset. She provides consistent reassurance giving affection and using calming words until children become more relaxed and confident. All children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because the childminder has a good understanding of how to effectively implement the Early Years Foundation Stage. She ensures that activities cover all areas of learning, are well matched to children's interests and abilities, and provide a good challenge. Effective systems are used to observe and assess individual children's progress, which are used to plan the steps in their learning.

Children make decisions about their play and learning, and access a wide range of activities and learning experiences, both in and out of the home, resulting in all children being motivated and interested to learn. They happily work out that if they press different buttons on a bus they make different noises. They attempt to build using large interlocking bricks of different colours and sizes, and work out how to fit the pieces together. Children express their creativity as they use a wide variety of media to paint, stick, draw, construct and play musical toys. They particularly enjoy making collages from leaves or daises they have collected and make 'crispie' cakes. However, there are limited natural resources made readily available for young children to fully explore their senses. They use their imagination, as they act out familiar role play scenarios and use dressing up clothes. The childminder is completely focused on the children whilst they are in her care and she knows them well. This ensures they feel safe, secure and provided with good levels support, as they develop new skills and explore their environment. For example, as they crawl to reach toys that interest them, help to feed themselves and practise walking skills. Children happily engage in activities with the childminder and respond very well to her sensitive guidance. For example, as they attempt to fit pieces into a clock puzzle they clap themselves, and point to the clock on the wall when the childminder asks them 'where's the clock'. The childminder counts and names the colours of the pieces as they play, promoting children's understanding of numerical and colour concepts. The childminder actively encourages children's communication and language skills. Younger children 'babble' to themselves as they play, and they are encouraged to attempt to say and repeat simple words. Their developing language is well supported through the use of books, songs and rhymes. Older children enjoy choosing books from the library and practise their writing skills, as they draw and trace letters.

Children have very good opportunities to learn about their own community and the wider world as they visit places of interest, such as, the coast, library, local walks and visiting parks. They learn about the natural environment, as they examine worms, watch birds in the garden, explore shells, sand and seaweed on the beach and collect fallen leaves. Trips out are well planned, to ensure that younger children who are not very confident are well supported and gradually introduced to social environments. The childminder has realistic expectations of children's

behaviour. She implements a range of good strategies to promote positive behaviour that help children understand right from wrong, and gives lots of praise and encouragement to ensure that children feel good about themselves. Children respond positively to the childminders sensitive and calm approach.

All children are developing good levels of understanding of how to keep themselves safe and a healthy lifestyle. They learn how to cross roads safely, carry out fire drills and have discussions about the dangers of strangers. They talk about fire safety after seeing a fire engine when out, and learn not to pick up berries when in the park. Reminders from the childminder throughout the day help children to learn to play with toys and equipment safely. Children follow good, consistent hygiene practices. They learn the importance of washing their hands and use their own towels. They help to clean toys and wipe tables after meals. The childminder encourages children to enjoy being active and learn about a healthy diet. They make choices from the wide range of healthy snacks and homemade meals. Fresh fruit and drinks are available for children to help themselves to through the day and older children help to prepare their own snacks. All children have good daily opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy being active. They play various games in the garden with a wide range of resources, go on daily walks, dance and move their bodies to music.

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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