

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY400702
Inspection date	10/03/2010
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst
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 has been registered since 2009. She lives in Stanley with her husband and two children aged 12 and 15 years. The whole of the ground floor, the sun house in the garden and the master bedroom and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. The home is within walking distance of local schools, toddler groups and a play park. There is also a rear garden available for outdoor play.

The family has a 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 caring for two children in this age range. The childminder is registered by Ofsted 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.

Children are cared for in a warm, inclusive environment where the childminder is fully aware of their interests and capabilities. She shows a good understanding of the learning and development requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage and helps children to progress well. She provides a good range of resources and activities that interest them and meet their individual needs. The childminder fosters close working relationships with parents which helps to fully support their children's development and learning. She follows clear procedures to ensure children are kept safe and secure. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude towards developing the service she provides, to help ensure continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- carry out the planned emergency evacuation procedure to ensure this works in practice
- continue the good practice of self-evaluation, implementing systems to ensure parents and children are involved and able to contribute to this process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has comprehensive policies and procedures in place, which underpin the service provided and ensure children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and promoted. This is combined with the childminder's good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and procedures to follow should she have any concerns. There are well-maintained systems in place to record attendance, as well as effective recording systems for accidents and medication administration. An up-to-date first aid certificate ensures that the childminder is able to respond effectively to any accidents. Detailed written risk assessments ensure the suitability and safety of outdoor and indoor furniture, equipment and toys as well as outings. This, combined with good levels of supervision, minimises any potential risks to children.

The learning environment is well-organised. The childminder has a good range of resources and positions them at low levels to encourage independent access and inspire play. She works to provide an enabling and inclusive environment which make parents and their children feel welcome. The childminder has developed a good working relationship with parents, collecting and sharing relevant information, and ensuring they remain actively involved in their child's ongoing learning and development. She appreciates the need to ensure that children feel comfortable and secure, and tailors their settling-in periods to their individual needs. Daily verbal feedback, diaries, text messages and access to children's individual development files ensures parents are aware of their child's progress and significant achievements. Parents are asked to read key policies and procedures, including the complaints procedure, and are asked to sign to confirm their understanding of these. No children currently attend any other settings, however, the childminder is very much aware of the need to develop links with other providers, sharing relevant information about the children to promote continuity of care and learning.

Although the childminder has yet to complete a written self-evaluation of the setting, it is clear from discussion that self-evaluation is important to her in order to identify key strengths and areas for improvement within her provision. She takes a proactive approach to ensure she continually builds on her existing knowledge. For instance, she actively seeks support and advice from local authority development workers, and is currently working towards becoming a member of the local childminding network. In addition to this she is also trying hard to secure places on short training courses. Although the childminder appreciates the need to involve parents and children in the evaluation of the provision, she has yet to implement systems which enable them to make their contributions.

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

The childminder has a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children enjoy a variety of stimulating and fun activities planned around their needs and interests. The childminder collects relevant information from parents at registration about what children enjoy and can do and uses this to assess their starting points. Planning is flexible, while ensuring there is a balance of adult and child-led activities delivered through indoor and outdoor play. The childminder undertakes regular observational assessments. These are closely linked to the six areas of learning and are used to identify the next steps in each child's development. The childminder always takes an active role in the children's activities and is skilled at recognising and maximising learning opportunities, ensuring children make good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder uses the space within her home imaginatively, creating well-equipped, exciting and stimulating play areas, such as, the conservatory and the sun house in the garden, both of which are geared to encourage children to become independent learners. Displays of colourful posters and examples of the children's work helps to promote a welcoming environment, promotes self-esteem and helps to develop a sense of belonging for the children. Children are well settled and have clearly formed secure relationships with the childminder. The childminder devotes her time and attention to the children, effectively promoting their learning through play. Communication, language, literacy, problem solving and numeracy skills are woven through all activities. For example, while the children are engrossed in making Mother's Day cards, she encourages them to count how many pom-poms they have used and what colour glue they are using. Children receive lots of individual attention from the childminder who actively supports their growing independence, encouraging them to do things for themselves, such as, dispensing the glue and helping with simple tasks. The childminder encourages children to express themselves freely and creatively. Their efforts are rewarded with plenty of meaningful praise. Children use role-play equipment, such as dressing up and playing in the pretend kitchen, acting out their experiences, which helps to foster their imaginations. They enjoy puzzles and construction toys, which encourages their spatial awareness. Children's understanding of the society in which they live is beginning to develop through discussion, stories and play resources, increasing their awareness of culture, gender and ability. This helps children recognise, value and respect similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Children are constantly learning about the safety precautions to take when out and about, by holding hands or finding a safe place to cross the road. The childminder has carefully considered how to evacuate the premises in an emergency and has the procedures displayed, however, as yet this has not been practised with the children to ascertain whether the procedure is successful in practice. The childminder uses positive strategies for managing behaviour. This helps the children to understand the boundaries set and to behave well. Plenty of praise and encouragement is used to raise children's confidence and self-esteem and help them to develop an awareness of right and wrong. The childminder has

established effective systems to help children stay healthy. She keeps her home clean and is implementing procedures to avoid cross-infection, such as using paper towels and disposable gloves when nappy changing. Children do not attend if they are sick, which enables the childminder to protect others from illness. In the main, parents provide their children with healthy packed lunches, sensitively guided by the childminders healthy eating policy. Children are offered and encouraged to have regular drinks to ensure they remain hydrated.

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	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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