

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	03/06/2010
Inspector	Susan Marriott
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 2010. She lives with her husband and their child aged 21 months in a house in the village of Wootton, to the south of Northampton. The childminder uses the ground floor of the property for the main childminding activities and bathroom facilities are located at ground floor level. There is an upstairs bedroom for children requiring undisturbed sleep. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding five children in the early years age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family has a pet cat and some goldfish. The childminder is working towards the quality standards in the Children Come First Scheme and is a member of the Northamptonshire Childminding Network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This childminder has enthusiastically embraced the essence of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has applied expertise gained from her previous professional career to the establishment of her childminding service and this enables her to offer an excellent standard of care and education to the children. Children clearly thrive and make rapid progress in this loving, family environment that truly recognises their uniqueness and individuality. The childminder meets the diverse needs of children and ensures that children participate in all activities in a fully inclusive way. Through her passionate commitment, dedication to extending her skills and knowledge through training and rigorous reflective practice, the childminder demonstrates an outstanding ability to identify strengths and weaknesses. This enables her to continuously enhance daily care and learning experiences for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- enhancing procedures for when working with others caring for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children enjoy an exceptionally high quality of care and education in this warm and welcoming family home setting, supported by exceptionally well-researched, organised and individualised policies, procedures and records. These help parents to understand the childminder's views and practices concerning childcare and also

serve to lay some ground rules. The childminder demonstrates an extremely good understanding of the procedures regarding the safeguarding of children and a very high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. She ensures that all household members undergo appropriate checks. A very clear complaints procedure is in place and extensive risk assessment is carefully recorded, consistently monitored and reviewed every six months. The identity of visitors is always checked before admitting them to the home and the front door is kept locked. Consequently, dangers are substantially minimised and children's safety is robustly secured.

The childminder makes exceptionally good use of the space available in her home to provide an extremely clean, welcoming environment for children. Resources are well-organised, accessible and clearly labelled with pictures as well as words to support children in making independent choices about their play. The childminder regularly uses the Northampton Toy Library to access an increased variety of toys and equipment. Although the outside area is being developed, the children still have free-flow access to the secure decked area and are able to take toys from inside to out as they choose. Children's development is fully promoted as the assessment procedures clearly show their starting points and are consistently used to inform the next steps. Activities and play opportunities are planned according to children's current interests and developmental needs, based on the childminder's formal and informal observations of them.

Partnership working is emergent and the childminder is working to establish stronger links with other providers who share the care of the children. The childminder has outstanding partnerships with parents and carers, recognising the importance of parents as children's primary carers and keeping them well-informed of their children's progress through daily diaries and regular discussions. The childminder demonstrates an infectious enthusiasm for her work and is highly motivated to make changes that drive improvement and improve the outcomes for children. Consequently, she is committed to studying for her Early Years Professional Status qualification and attending any appropriate training available to extend her skills and support further improvement in her practice. The childminder is using her self-evaluation form as a working document to secure her outstanding capacity to improve.

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

Children have tremendous fun in this newly-established, friendly and stimulating environment in which they feel safe and secure. The childminder plans and prepares the day to meet the children's individual needs using information gathered through constant observation and evaluation. She helps and supports children through praise and encouragement to recognise their own achievements and develop self-confidence and self-esteem. She implements learning from her continuing professional studies to promote the components of high quality childcare. Children benefit from a friendly and safe, home environment with a family atmosphere. The childminder is very highly skilled in sharing her attention between the children and valuing their input to whatever is going on. For example,

she scoops each child onto her lap to share favourite books and nursery rhymes. The childminder includes children in activities such as cooking, shopping, gardening and family mealtimes ensuring that children can learn, play and develop. They receive consistent one-to-one attention whilst enjoying interaction with others. Children are consistently offered stimulating activities and challenging play opportunities and they make rapid progress in all areas of learning. They are offered free play so they can select their own toys and play alone or with adult interaction as and when required. The childminder effectively draws the learning from child-led play, delivering a series of activities at a lively pace to sustain children's interest and concentration.

Planning of daily routines is appropriately flexible and responsive to the needs of children and the childminder ensures that she provides a balance of activities across the differing days of minding activity. Children enjoy an extended range of play activities and develop their social skills with other children as they visit soft play centres, mums and tots groups and childminder pop-ins. They benefit from days out to such places as Daventry Country Park, Abington Park and Wootton Play Park. Children have plentiful opportunities to develop their physical skills because the weekly routine includes daily opportunities to play in the garden and walks in the locality. The childminder has quickly established a highly effective observation and assessment system. Observations and next steps are closely linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage criteria and information gathered is used to plan future activities, thus securing children's rapid progress towards the early learning goals.

Children play on the decked area of the garden in the early morning sunshine, protected with sun cream and hats. They ask for water to put in the sink in the play house kitchen and the childminder fetches a bottle from the kitchen, using mathematical language as she describes it being full, half full and empty. Children dig and explore the sand in a large, shallow tray. The childminder sustains excellent quality interaction with the children, asking them what the sand feels like as they walk in it with bare feet. She challenges them to bury their toes and counts the handfuls of sand that it takes to hide their little feet. When they unbury their feet and begin to walk in the sand, she points out that they are making footprints and together they count how many they can find. As the children begin to throw the sand, she explains that we do not throw sand because it can go into eyes and hurt them. The childminder extends children's vocabulary effectively, using the word 'gritty' when explaining that putting a sandal back on sandy feet might feel different. She promotes concentration and focus on the sand activity by challenging the children to pile up the sand and make a mountain. The children squash the 'mountain' and she suggests that they 'make it big again, pile it higher and higher and push it together'. Children pick up the sand moulds and observe they have made a shape in the sand. The childminder points out that the shape is a circle.

Young children are becoming aware of healthy lifestyles and the relevance of hygiene practices through daily explanation by the childminder, who teaches children to look after themselves and those around them by helping them to make the right choice. Ongoing discussions mean that young children understand the importance of daily practices such as being 'sun aware' and washing their hands

before snacks and meals. Thorough documentation is maintained relating to accidents, medication and incidents and robust procedures are in place, protecting the children's health and well-being. The children learn effectively about keeping safe inside and outside of the home. For example, the childminder prompts children to hold hands and stop at roads when out and about. She also discusses 'stranger danger' using stories to help the children to understand issues. Children's behaviour is managed exceptionally well and highly effective strategies ensure their social, physical and economic well-being are met.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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