

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 317275 |
| Inspection date | 16/06/2009 |
| Inspector | Diane Roberts |

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| 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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1996. She lives with her husband and three grown up children in Cockermouth, Cumbria close to shops, schools, parks and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor apart from the conservatory is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. Toilet facilities are on the first floor. The childminder walks to local toddler and activity groups and takes children to the local park. The family have a Labrador-spaniel pet dog.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and attends several toddler groups on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The childminder's very good knowledge of each child's individual needs and the admirable partnership with parents ensures an inclusive setting. All aspects of children's welfare and development are successfully encouraged by the childminder. Safeguarding children whilst promoting independence is her greatest priority. The childminder is dedicated to improving her service to provide superior care and education through regular quality checks and self-assessment thereby promoting positive 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 a systematic and routine approach to using observations to identify learning priorities for each child and plan activities.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder successfully uses self-evaluation to monitor her provision. She is highly committed to updating her knowledge and improving her practise. Through dedicated self assessment she clearly identifies any gaps in her service or knowledge ensuring she keeps up to date with new legislation such as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This means children continue to benefit from the high quality care and education she offers. Safeguarding children is given the

highest priority and the childminder has a keen awareness of child protection issues and very good documentation provides further guidance. Resources are effectively and efficiently deployed and highly effective risk assessments are consistently carried out with actions promptly taken to manage or eliminate risks. The partnership with parents and others are a significant strength of the provision and the childminder makes sure they are provided with very good quality information about the early years provision and their children's achievements and progress. When children start with the childminder, parents are given a comprehensive pack that contains such items as her policies and procedures. Weekly plans, including routines and activities, are prominently displayed. Activities include mention of the early learning goals demonstrating there are no gaps in the provision. Photographs are used to reassure parents their children are happy and enjoying themselves whilst in the childminder's care. Many of the positive comments from parents about the childminder include that she is, 'patient' and 'gentle but firm'. Parents say she offers, 'excellent care' in a 'loving environment'. Further comments mention children dancing, going on walks and having a 'varied and active social life'.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children appear happy in this well organised homely setting. They are very settled and at ease with the childminder who is most attentive and calm in her approach. Through consistent genuine praise and encouragement children are developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem. The childminder creates an environment where children are happy to learn from her excellent role modelling. Children freely choose from a very wide range of inspiring resources and the childminder skilfully draws on children's favourite activities such as dressing-up to ensure all six areas of learning are included. Children become engrossed in their play exercising their imagination with such items as the varied collection of dolls, clothes and blankets readily available to them. The childminder quickly responds to children's requests for other resources to extend their play still further. Children are well behaved and well mannered, saying 'yes please' without prompt. The childminder remains close by, often entering into the spirit of play without taking over. Children have great fun dressing up often putting on layer after layer of clothes. They giggle as they don a pair of wings or clomp around the room in heeled dressing-up shoes. Skilful questioning by the childminder encourages children to count or talk about the different colours in their many outfits.

Children enjoy talking to the childminder about their play and experiences. Participating at their different levels of ability means all children benefit and face appropriate challenge accordingly. During creative activities children are very outgoing and confident. By expertly promoting children's communication and language skills the childminder initiates plenty of conversation. They discuss together the different sounds words are made up from, making the bzzzz sound for a 'buzzy bee' in unison. Children burst into spontaneous rhymes they have learned with the childminder or they recall from a previous occasion that honey comes from bees. Information from observation and assessment is generally used to ensure that children achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities, but at present observations are not consistently used to

clearly link daily planning for individual children. However, the childminder does ensure a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities resulting in children being active learners, creative and able to think critically. The childminder goes to a lot of trouble to arrange trips all children will thoroughly enjoy. For instance, children are greatly excited at the prospect of visiting the fire station the next day. Each week, children visit the local library thereby promoting their love of books. Children enjoy shopping with the childminder, making lists by drawing pictures of what they need before they set off. Where possible they select the goods from the shelves, talking constantly about what they need, what they can make, how many items they have and how much it will cost when they get to the check-out. This means children's economic well being is being promoted through everyday activities they enjoy.

Children learn about staying healthy through literature such as the book about 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. They make wholesome soups and fruit salads, weighing and measuring ingredients and learning about how the cooking process changes things, encouraging their knowledge and understanding of the world. They follow appropriate hygiene routines, such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet which helps to reduce the spread of germs and infections. Development of their fine motor skills is promoted through encouragement in holding pencils and brushes to draw and paint. Creating collages and manipulating play dough further encourages children's creativity and imagination whilst promoting their physical development. Thereby children are making good progress through their experiences of inspiring and challenging opportunities that cover all areas of learning.

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

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice? | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 2 |

Quality and standards

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| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | 2 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 2 |

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met