

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 256921 |
| Inspection date | 21/05/2009 |
| Inspector | Hazel McLean |
| Type of setting | Childminder |

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 1995. She lives with her husband, one adult child and one child of five years in the village of Castor. The play room and kitchen are used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. Children have access to a bathroom and bedroom on the ground floor, in addition to the family sitting room.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five 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 three children under eight years. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to local schools to collect children and attends local parent and toddler groups. The childminder takes children to a nearby park and open play spaces on a regular basis. The family has a pet dog.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The childminder develops highly effective partnerships with parents where information about children's individual needs is routinely shared to support good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. She provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment which values children's individuality and focuses on positive, realistic methods to promote their understanding and confidence. Children enjoy their daily excursions and take particular delight in exploring the natural wonders of the world around them. The childminder continually assesses her provision in order to build upon the quality of facilities and accommodate the increasing needs of children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the risk assessment to include anything a child may come into contact with, in particular, the new chicken hutch and proximity of chickens to children
- continue to develop opportunities for children to sort and categorise objects, such as, at 'tidy up time'.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder reflects the guiding themes and main principles of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in her organisation and practice. She has undertaken EYFS training and displays relevant registration and first aid certificates. She maintains appropriate records, consent forms and documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting and welfare of children.

Children are safeguarded by the childminder's high level of commitment. She has a thorough understanding of safeguarding issues, is aware of the steps to take should any concerns arise and how to follow this up to protect children. She implements very effective procedures to keep the premises secure and has carried out risk assessments to ensure children can move around freely and have safe access to play spaces. The childminder regularly checks all the play equipment, indoors and out, such as, the trampoline and play house, and has increased the safety of children by applying safety film to glass windows where necessary, and installing child safety gates. Although the very newly acquired chicken hutch has not yet formed part of the risk assessment, the childminder is vigilant in her plans to ensure that children will be kept safe when in the proximity of chickens, which she intends to use as an additional resource to enhance children's understanding of animal life.

The childminder routinely monitors her provision, evaluating strengths and acting upon areas for improvement as they arise, for instance, by purchasing a new scooter to replace an older, bigger one which was not suitable for the children. She has developed her home by providing a dedicated playroom to create an extremely child-friendly environment which provides ample equipment and resources to support children's individual and growing needs. In addition, she swaps toys around to encourage greater participation and motivation.

The childminder makes written agreements and takes account of information shared by parents to establish children's starting points and gain further understanding of what they already know and can do. She demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion and values children for their unique qualities. She familiarises herself with children's additional spoken languages and provides resources to promote anti-discriminatory practice as part of everyone's ongoing development. This ensures there is choice and each child is included regardless of differences. The childminder continues to work with parents and shares information daily regarding their children's needs and progress. Parents confirm their satisfaction with the childminder's exceptional approach to working in partnership by providing written feedback letters which acknowledge this.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children move freely and safely around the playroom, responding readily to the childminder's cheerful encouragement. They make good progress in their learning as they experiment and explore with materials of their choice. In addition, adult-led activities, such as play with shaving foam, provides an ideal texture for children to wiggle their fingers, make shapes and practise their early writing skills. Children have good opportunities to communicate and extend their language skills as the childminder constantly supports them, staying close enough to readily listen and respond. She asks relevant questions and gently prompts them in finding the correct words to express themselves. Children develop their early number skills by counting the paving stones and looking at door numbers. There is sometimes less opportunity for them to develop their calculating skills by helping to sort and tidy up toys as part of daily routine.

The childminder gives children close attention and supports them well as they play. She constantly interacts, introducing them to new vocabulary and modelling speech intuitively. They struggle into fairy outfits with the childminder's help and play alongside each other, donning hats and hairpieces. The childminder listens with interest asking open-ended questions, prompting giggles and laughter as they continue exploring containers and pulling out objects, sometimes grappling for the same thing. When the childminder holds up a small doll's hat, one of the children ably manipulates it to fit accurately on a doll's head. The childminder praises her achievement, closely echoed by another child. The childminder promotes children's harmonious play, encouraging them to join in, work together and respect each other.

The childminder provides a balance of adult and child-led activities which extend through to the garden as children continue their dressing-up games and role play. This applies to washing hands in the home corner unit before settling down to lunch, thus promoting children's independence and helping them to practise healthy routines. The childminder routinely observes children's play to provide activities for their wider learning and next steps. Children have access to a range of physically challenging equipment to support their healthy growth, balance and coordination, for example, with use of a climbing frame, trampoline and slide. Trips to the park and nearby allotments help promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world as they look for rabbits and watch the movement of hens and visit horses in a nearby field. They are taught to develop an understanding of dangers and how to keep themselves safe, for example, by using the green cross code as they practise crossing the road.

Children develop habits and behaviours appropriate to good learners, their own needs and those of others. The childminder recognises that children's behaviour patterns link to their stage of development and is alert to potential issues before they arise, calmly diverting attention. Each child's contribution is valued as she makes sure there are sufficient numbers of the same toys and encourages all of the children to be included. The childminder works with parents to promote good behaviour and discusses this on a daily basis.

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? | 1 |
| 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 |

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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| 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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