

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	300999
Inspection date	08/07/2009
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
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 has been registered since October 1999. She lives with her husband, one adult daughter and three younger children aged 14, nine and six years. They live in a house in the Middleton St. George area near to Darlington. The house is situated within walking distance of schools, shops, a park, a playgroup and other local amenities. The ground floor and the first floor bathroom are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The family has two pet dogs.

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 in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school on a regular basis.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is satisfactory. The childminder demonstrates a positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment for all the children in her care. She knows the children well and considers their individual needs in the care she provides. Systems for self-evaluation of the provision are in place and the childminder has a commitment to continuous improvement and regularly attends training. The varied range of resources available ensures children have the opportunity to make satisfactory progress and generally each area of learning is appropriately covered. Children's ability and involvement in range of play and learning experiences is observed and recorded satisfactorily. However, the childminder is not yet effectively using the observations to clearly incorporate into planning for the next steps in their learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the opportunities for children to begin to know about other peoples cultures in order to celebrate the similarities and differences between them in a diverse society
- use observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- develop the risk assessments to clearly identify and minimise all risks related to the gazebo and swimming pool in the garden
- continue to develop partnerships with parents to enable them to review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

A suitable range of policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. These are shared with parents informing them of the service provided. Written permission is requested from parents at the time of the child's admission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future, protecting children's health. All records for the safe and efficient management of the setting are maintained, helping to meet the needs of all children. Children are safeguarded, as the childminder has a sound understanding of child protection issues and who to contact with any concerns. Detailed risk assessments on most areas of the home and outings are in place. However, records do not clearly evaluate risks in relation to the new gazebo in the garden and the small swimming pool. Fire drills are practised regularly, which helps to protect children's safety and develop their understanding of dangers and how to stay safe.

The childminder is beginning to use the Ofsted self-evaluation form to evaluate the care and education she provides. She gains verbal feedback from parents to give her a broader view of her childminding service. The childminder has made positive steps to address the actions and recommendations raised at the previous inspection. This has resulted in all the required documentation being in place and progress being made in other areas of her practice. She recognises her main strength as being the good relationships she has with children, which results in them being settled and happy. The childminder is also realistic in identifying the need to continue developing her knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage particularly in relation to her systems for observing and assessing children's progress. This realisation enables her to better organise the systems she has in place.

The childminder has built suitable relationships with parents. She speaks to them on a daily basis and parents also receive written feedback in the form of daily diaries to ensure they are aware of the activities their children have participated in. Opportunities for parents to review children's progress and contribute to their child's learning and development record are not clearly developed. This has a slightly negative impact on ensuring continuity and coherence. The childminder is beginning to develop links with the local school regarding children's developmental needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the EYFS. Children are happy, settled and relate well to her, as she joins in with their play. They benefit from a flexible routine including a balance of child-centred and adult-led activities. The childminder's appropriate approach to equal opportunities contributes to children's positive attitude to the wider community. However, there are few resources and activities offered to supplement this. Consequently, this negatively impacts on their growing awareness and understanding of difference. Appropriate use is made of the space so that they can move around independently

and choose from a good range of age appropriate resources. The childminder is developing her understanding of the EYFS, and currently plans an appropriate range of activities which cover most areas of learning. She has recently introduced observation records in each child's learning diary. However, these are in the early stages and as yet, do not clearly identify learning priorities for each child to effectively inform future planning.

Children's behaviour is managed well. The calm and patient childminder encourages good behaviour by being a good role model and by setting realistic boundaries whilst still allowing children to take appropriate risks to develop their coping skills. Children enjoy some opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning, for example, they have access to a computer software and some interactive toys with the current favourite being the 'duck' game. A selection of dressing up clothes and tents and tunnels is made available to the children to promote their imaginative play. Children also love to have picnics in the garden and make 'dens' using table cloths. The childminder has a range of books, from which she makes a selection available for children to enjoy independently or with others. Toddlers particularly enjoy explore their senses using the 'feely books'. Children's communication skills are appropriately fostered through various activities, including songs and rhymes resulting in good interactions between themselves and the childminder. They enjoy mark making and are developing good hand and eye coordination. A variety of creative activities, including painting and manipulating play dough, promote children's self-expression whilst having fun. Children have fun painting their hands and feet and making prints on paper. A variety of games and puzzles, help to promote children's problem solving skills, for example, young children explore jigsaws and remain interested as they try to fit the pieces together.

Children are welcomed into clean and well-kept premises where they have sufficient space to play. The childminder implements suitable procedures for nappy changing, to ensure the personal care needs of the very young are met. Children do not attend if they are sick which enables the childminder to protect others from illness. They access some opportunities for large physical play. These include exploring age-appropriate climbing equipment in the park and the trampoline in the garden. They also enjoying swimming, roller skating, and going for walks locally. Outings include trips to the local 'adventure point' playground. Toddlers are fostering their locomotion and balance skills through a selection of push-and-pull toys. Children are active or restful through choice and toddlers sleep in-line with their individual needs and parent's wishes. Parents Systems are in place to gather information with regard to special dietary needs, which ensures children's individual needs are met. Children are kept safe on outings as they learn road safety procedures and appropriate restraints are used for children who use a buggy. Regular checks and cleaning keep toys in a good condition, ensuring that children handle items that are clean and safe.

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

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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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