

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	501077
Inspection date	14/07/2009
Inspector	Stephen Andrew Blake
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 2001 and lives with her husband and their three teenage children in their home in Blindcrake, near Cockermouth. She is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The whole of the ground floor except the rear lobby is used for childminding. There are several steps to the entrance at the front of the property but rear access is available. The childminder has use of her car for transporting minded children to local groups and for outings. The family have one dog living in the house.

The childminder has entered into partnership arrangements with local childcare providers. She is registered to care for a total of six children and occasionally works with another childminder. The childminder is currently minding four children on a part-time basis at variable times throughout the week. Of these, all children on roll are within the early year's age group.

The childminder 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 works closely with parents to ensure that she has a good understanding of each child's individual needs and promotes all aspects of children's welfare effectively. She has established robust written risk assessments and has a sound understanding of safeguarding procedures. Written policies and procedures are generally implemented effectively. Children enjoy a good range of activities and the childminder has established generally effective systems for observation and assessment to help children make progress in their learning. The childminder has a positive and appropriate understanding of inclusive practice and has established effective links with other childcare providers to ensure continuity of care. Regular self evaluation ensures that any priorities for future development are identified and acted on.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that observations and assessments of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles are consistently applied and available for all children within the Early Years Foundation Stage
- ensure the safeguarding children procedure includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against the childminder or member of the household.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has established a system of self-evaluation and has an appropriate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of her service. She is proactive in identifying some aspects of training to support her development, for example, with regard to commencing a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in care and learning.

Parents are valued as partners and the childminder provides regular verbal communication as well as a good range of written policies and procedures. The childminder has established effective daily diaries to detail children's activities and care routines and shares these with parents. Parents are encouraged to maintain an effective two-way flow of communication and written parental questionnaires and testimonials show that this works well. The childminder has established an effective system for communication with other child care providers. For example, where children attend another childminder on different days she has established a shared diary system. This helps to ensure that children's needs are met and there is continuity in their learning.

Children are safeguarded because the childminder has established effective risk assessments for the registered premises. There is a sound written risk assessment to safeguard children's safety when out on regular walks, participating in outings and for transporting children in the childminder's vehicle. Children are safeguarded because the childminder has an appropriate understanding of safeguarding procedures and has established generally appropriate safeguarding policies. However, the written safeguarding policy does not include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against the childminder.

The childminder is warm and welcoming to all children and their families. There is a good range of appropriate play equipment accessible to children who know where their favourite toys are. Policy statements show an inclusive, anti-discriminatory approach to the childminder's business and are available to parents for their information.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are well-settled and have a good relationship with the childminder. She has created a calm, welcoming environment and provides children with sensitive support. The childminder has an appropriate understanding of how children learn and provides resources that encourage and stimulate their enthusiasm and motivation for learning. For example, she provides children with a range of craft resources to support their creative development and encourages them with mark-making to develop their literacy skills. She has established systems for planning a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities across all areas of learning. She has begun to implement systems for observation and assessment of children's learning and development but her systems are not fully in place for all children. The childminder shares information with parents about identified next steps in their children's learning and involves them appropriately in monitoring the quality

of her service, for example, through regular discussions and written questionnaires.

The learning environment is conducive to children's learning and development. The childminder provides children with a good range of accessible resources across the registered age range. This means they have opportunities to make good progress in their learning and development. During activities the childminder supports children's learning appropriately as she asks children a range of sensitive questions relating to their chosen activity. She uses stories skilfully to help children think about the needs of others and recognise their own uniqueness. This helps children to feel valued and promotes their self-esteem. The childminder is flexible and able to adjust her plans quickly in order to accommodate children's interests. For example, when deciding to make a seaside collage in response to a child's request. This flexibility helps to maximise children's learning opportunities. Children are involved in their local community and socialise with other children as they go for local walks, regularly visit a range of play groups and visit children attending a nearby childminder.

Children begin to understand how to keep themselves safe from harm as they participate in regular fire drills and listen to the childminder talk about how to stay safe when going for walks. The childminder has established appropriate systems to help children stay healthy, for example, with regard to keeping her home clean and implementing procedures to avoid cross-infection. Children are beginning to develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being as they use a good range of programmable toys and resources and participate in outings where they can learn about the world around them.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

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?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

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

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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