

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY266993
Inspection date	11/09/2009
Inspector	Karen Cockings
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 2003. She lives with her husband, adult daughter and two younger children, aged 15 and 10 years in a suburb of Sheffield, within walking distance of local schools, parks and other amenities. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding, with the exception of the conservatory. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time. She currently minds six children in the early years age range. She is also included on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has a relevant qualification at level 2 and is working towards level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder takes positive steps to promote children's safety, welfare and learning. She recognises children's individuality, gets to know them well and provides a secure and stimulating environment for them. Most aspects of partnership working are strong, which helps to promote continuity for children. The childminder critically reflects upon her practice, accessing relevant training to enhance her skills and to further improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop partnerships with other settings involved in children's care, in order to promote continuity of care and learning
- consider further ways of involving parents in their children's learning and inviting their contributions to children's development records
- consolidate the use of observations to identify learning priorities and to plan for individual children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. She has recently attended relevant training to ensure that her knowledge is up-to-date and reference materials are readily available should she have any concerns. The childminder ensures that her safeguarding policy is shared effectively with parents. From a broader safety perspective, the childminder conducts and records thorough

risk assessments for the premises and for specific outings, identifying any action that needs to be taken to minimise risks to children. Effective measures are taken around the home to keep children safe, including the development of an emergency evacuation plan, which is practised with them. Records, policies and procedures are implemented well, to support the effective management of the provision and to maintain children's health and safety.

Close liaison with parents helps the childminder to meet children's individual needs successfully. Parents are well informed about the provision and are given a warm welcome. For example, important paperwork, such as the registration certificate and insurance documents, are on display in the entrance hall, together with a welcome poster in different languages and a photographic display of children busily engaged in activities. Parents receive copies of the childminder's written policies, giving them a good insight into the way she operates. Their views about the setting are sought by means of questionnaires and through discussion. They comment positively about the way the childminder makes time to talk to them about their children's development and about the range of activities she offers. Before children are placed with the childminder, she gathers information from parents about children's interests and abilities, so that she has a good understanding of their starting points. However, she is not yet making full use of opportunities to include parents' comments in children's development folders as a way of involving them in their children's learning. Partnerships with other settings involved in children's care are not yet fully established although the childminder takes note of nursery planning so that she can extend topics at home.

The setting is welcoming and inclusive. The childminder has addressed the recommendation made at her previous inspection by taking steps to increase children's awareness of different cultures and needs. She displays attractive posters and photographs at children's height, which prompts conversations with them, and she ensures that books, dolls and other resources reflect positive images. She speaks positively about how she would support a child with additional needs, or who speaks English as an additional language. The childminder demonstrates a firm commitment to the further improvement of her service. She attends relevant training to ensure her knowledge of childcare issues is up-to-date and is beginning to make good use of self-evaluation systems to identify areas for future development. She makes good use of resources overall to stimulate children's learning; many of the toys and books are easily accessible, outdoor spaces are used well and the childminder has a good grasp of how she can build on resources to further enhance children's experiences.

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

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. Her gentle manner helps children to feel comfortable and at ease with her. She shows children they are valued by respecting their choices and warmly acknowledging their achievements. Their art work and photographs are on display around the setting. Younger children are learning how to share and to play cooperatively together, because gentle reminders help them to negotiate turn taking and to understand the needs

of others. They enjoy each other's company, giggling with delight when the childminder gets involved in their play, for example, by using the stethoscope to check that her 'patients' are well.

Children are developing a good awareness of what they can do to keep themselves safe and healthy. They love to be outdoors, either in the garden or during outings to parks and play centres. They develop confidence and physical skills as they steer and pedal wheeled toys along the paths in the garden, climb and balance as they use larger equipment in local parks, or have fun playing in the sand tray. They set up tea parties in the play house or 'paint' the toys with water and large brushes. Importantly, children develop a good understanding of how to keep safe when out and about as they practise crossing roads together, learning to look out for cars coming out of driveways, and to look and listen for traffic. Younger children learn how to negotiate the step down to the garden, with the childminder nearby to give a helping hand if necessary. Good standards of hygiene are maintained within the home, which helps to protect children from the spread of infection. The childminder teaches them about safe hygiene practice as part of daily routines, such as hand washing before they have snack and after using the toilet. Children's good health is further promoted through the provision of healthy meals and snacks, which include a varied range of fruit and vegetables. Children sit sociably together at the child-sized table, talking about their likes and dislikes. They make pictures of their favourite fruits for display, take part in baking activities and watch the grapes growing on the vines in the garden.

The childminder has a good understanding of how children learn through play. She makes sensitive observations of children to find out what they are interested in and their individual learning styles. For example, she notices that a child is fascinated by a transporter they see during one of their outings and that they love building. She therefore provides them with plenty of construction materials and encourages them in their designs, both on paper and as three dimensional objects. She notes which areas of learning she is covering as part of activities and identifies the next steps in children's development. However, she is not yet fully confident in consistently building links between her observations and her planning for individual children.

Children develop communication skills as they take part in role play activities with enthusiasm, organising tea parties and hospitals and inviting the childminder to join them. Early mark-making is nurtured as children use single handed tools, such as paintbrushes, glue spreaders and scoops. The childminder fosters number and mathematical skills as she makes good use of incidental opportunities to bring number, shape and colour into their play and everyday routines. Children enjoy creative activities, using their senses to explore the textures and shapes of materials as they make collage pictures, and as they play with dough and sand. Their knowledge and understanding of the world around them is developing well. They plant sunflowers in the garden, find out how things work and talk to the childminder about the needs of others as they look at photographs and pictures with her. Children are eager to take part in activities, responding with excitement to the childminder's suggestions.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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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