

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15/09/2009
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall
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 has been registered since 2002 and lives with her husband and four children all under eight years of age. They live in a four bedroom house within easy walking distance of the local amenities of Skegness. Childminding mainly takes place on the ground floor and children have access to a lounge, dining area, sitting area, playroom and toilet area. There is an enclosed garden available for play at the rear of the premises.

The childminder is registered to care for two children under eight years of age when working alone or six children under eight years of age when working with a registered assistant. Of these, only one maybe in the early years age range when working alone or when working with an assistant three maybe in the early years age range, she is currently caring for two children within this age range. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The family have a cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is qualified to Level 4 in a relevant childcare qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enter a warm and welcoming environment that has been specifically organised to support their care, learning and play. The childminder is experienced and well qualified and uses this knowledge to provide the children with a range of interesting activities and resources that supports their overall development within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The information gained from observation and assessment is used to ensure that individual children's needs are developed and all are included. Strong community links and successful partnerships with parents ensure a consistency of care. Self-evaluation procedures are realistic in identifying strengths and weaknesses and the information is successfully used to implement changes that enhance the provision for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain written parental permission for children to take part in outings.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively promoted by a conscientious childminder who has a good awareness of how to keep children safe. In depth risk assessments have been completed for the home, garden and each type of outing the children make.

Any hazards on the premises have been identified and resolved enabling children to explore and move around their play space confidently, building on their sense of belonging and independence. Vetting procedures for assistants are robust and although parents give written permission for children to be left solely with them the information does not specify in what circumstances this is likely to occur and for what reasons. This lack of clarity may impact on the expectations of the provision for children. The childminder has a good understanding of issues relating to child protection including identifying children at risk and making referrals following the correct procedures. She has attended training on initiatives to work closely with multi-agencies in supporting children and their families. Policies and procedures are in place to support children's health such as a sick children's policy, correctly recorded accident and medication records. These are supported by practical hygiene measures such as children having individual flannels for hand washing, individual sleep mats and linen and knowing to wash their hands before they eat. Most permissions are in place such as to seek emergency medical treatment and apply sun creams, however, permission to take children on outings is not in place.

The childminder provides an inclusive service for all children and is successful in ensuring that they get the support they need and make good progress in their learning. She particularly supports children's developing skills in communication, language and literacy very well. Parents are kept informed through a number of systems about their child's progress; for example, daily discussions, written policies and involvement in the observation procedures. She actively encourages them to be involved in discussing their own observations of the children's progress and they work together on identified next steps; this ensures that the provision is focused on children's individual needs. Effective partnerships with other professionals involved with the children also contribute to the consistency of care, including easier transitions to the local school.

The childminder is keen to improve her childminding practice through ongoing training in higher level qualifications. She has identified her strengths and recognises that there are areas for improvement through specific self-evaluations. These are reviewed annually and link her training, resources and activities to the four themes within the EYFS; this ensures that she monitors all aspects of her provision. Changes made to enhance children's welfare include new observation and planning formats and a renovated environment. Children now have a specific playroom with resources that are easily accessible to them, space to play, free flow inside and outside and areas for quiet activities and rest. This makes best use of space and resources and assistants are deployed well to continually support children's care.

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

The children are happy and settled and enjoy their time in the childminder's care. Firm relationships are in place with the childminder and the children's families, in addition the assistant and childminder have been involved with local schools and daycare provisions. Consequently, the children are very familiar with their learning

environments and transitions are managed extremely well to ensure children are secure at all times. Older children attend before and after school and have the freedom to make choices for themselves from the wide range of activities throughout the provision. Young children complete extended settling in visits and information gained from parents is used immediately to plan and provide activities and resources that are familiar to them. The impact of this is that trusting relationships are built steadily and the children quickly become confident in their surroundings. They are able to initiate aspects of their own play as they make choices and decisions for themselves. They are keen to explore new materials and enjoy both joining together for play and solitary play.

Children's communication and language skills are constantly being encouraged by a childminder who has a good understanding of speech and language issues. She talks to children about their activities at all times, discussing what they are doing and what they can do next. At nappy changing time a child begins to sing the tune to their regular animal themed song and the childminder points at pictures of animals naming them and including them in the song. Books and stories are looked at daily, with older children she encourages them to think about what might happen next in the story and compare the characters in the book to real life events. For younger children she reads the story and uses simple words to describe the pictures, repeating words and encouraging the children to respond. She responds positively to their chattering noises encouraging them to communicate their needs and wants.

Children's confidence and self-esteem are increased as they respond to the positive praise and encouragement from the childminder. This impacts positively on their behaviour as there are clear expectations of them, for example, a young child has learnt to put the shoes away when they are taken off and is aware that when the shoes are brought out this signifies outdoor play. The children are given time to play and explore for themselves, enabling them to investigate, problem solve and build new experiences. For example, a young child uses a watering can to fill a bucket with water, they are curious about the movement of the water and stop to observe it. The childminder sees this and drops two stones into the bucket, these are removed and the child copies the activity watching as the stones sink. The water is then accidentally tipped out and the child is astonished that it has gone, even though they are now sitting in it. The childminder tailors learning to the individual children's needs using detailed observations, links to the early learning goals and plans next steps. She plans for a daily focused activity to challenge previous learning and ensure children continue with activities that have been identified as being of interest to them.

Children are learning about how to live healthy lives as they adopt good personal hygiene routines, such as knowing their individual towel for hand washing. Healthy and nutritious foods such as wholemeal bread products and fresh fruit and vegetables are provided and outdoor play is accessible daily. They are also developing their understanding of the diversity of society through discussions, stories and play resources, increasing their awareness of culture, gender and ability. The children are learning to respect their own needs and those of others around them. They are making good progress in their 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

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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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