

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/11/2009
Inspector	Linda Cook
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 1993 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She runs her childminding business from the family home which she shares with her husband and two daughters aged 15 and 12 years. The childminder lives in a semi-detached house in Helmsley. Children have full use of the ground floor and only access the first floor to use the bathroom. There is an enclosed garden to the side and rear of the property for outdoor play. The family have a pet rabbit which is kept outdoors.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and occasionally works with an assistant. She works four days a week, Monday to Thursday and currently cares for six children in the early years age range and additional older children are also cared for before and after school and in holidays. She has contact with the local primary and nursery school where children can be taken and collected. Children are transported by car with the consent of parents.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The excellent relationships developed with parents are a key strength of the setting and ensure the childminder has a very good knowledge of each child's needs. She is highly motivated in her work with the children and uses self-evaluation effectively to evaluate and assess the quality of her work and outcomes for children. The childminder is a qualified and experienced child carer and uses observation and information from parents very effectively to make sure that children develop well in relation to their starting points. Children enjoy their increasing knowledge, skills and confidence, due to the pleasant homely environment and excellent supportive relationships they develop with the childminder and each other.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further children's record of learning and development so that it includes evaluative observations, identifying their starting points, recent interests, individual learning styles and next steps in learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Clearly defined safeguarding procedures, a rolling programme of related training and carefully filed documentation, ensures that children's welfare is promoted and

their well-being safeguarded. Records, such as those of accidents, attendance and risk assessments are kept up to date and signed by parents where appropriate.

While space is limited in the childminder's home, she uses the available space well providing children with opportunities to become independent. For example, resources are easily available and laid out on the carpet and in low level storage units. The childminder ensures all children can participate in the planned activities at an appropriate level for the age and stage of development in an inclusive environment. Flexible daily routines allow them to experience a wide range of activities in the home and to develop their knowledge of the local community.

The childminder has introduced a formal system of self-evaluation which clearly identifies the strengths of the provision and areas for development. Questionnaires completed by parents and the children ensure their views are sought and considered. The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to the continuous development of the service she provides and improving outcomes for children. She attends ongoing training to ensure her knowledge and skills are kept up to date and has fully addressed the recommendation from the last inspection. As a result, children increase their understanding of cultural diversity through the positive images displayed and very young children explore texture and form through the natural materials provided in treasure baskets.

A high level of communication with parents, both written and verbal, means that children's individual needs are fully promoted. There is a very effective two-way flow of information between the childminder and parents both at the outset of care arrangements and as children grow and develop. This ensures that children are valued as individuals and are therefore settled and make good progress. Parents develop very trusting relationships with the childminder, they work co-operatively together and enjoy socialising, for example, as they attend an annual barbeque organised by the childminder for the children and their families. The childminder develops very good links with other providers, particularly the local school. She has regular contact with other childminders and the local authority development through cluster group meetings. Children's learning records are given to parents to share with other settings, ensuring consistency in care and learning for all children.

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

All children are very happy and well-settled in the welcoming and child orientated environment. They have a very close and trusting relationship with the childminder and are made to feel part of the family. Through the childminder's positive praise and encouragement children behave very well and develop good manners. Children begin to show a real sense of care and consideration towards one another, taking turns, sharing resources and playing quietly while another child settles down for a sleep. Children benefit from the broad range of good quality toys and equipment. They confidently choose their own resources and develop a sense of responsibility as they are encouraged to help tidy away some of the toys before getting more out, thus ensuring a well-organised and safe environment.

Through discussion and documentation, the childminder demonstrates her secure knowledge of each child's differing abilities, progress and achievements. She continues to develop her confidence in using recently introduced more formal systems of observation and assessment, and these are beginning to evidence children's progression and to identify their next steps in learning.

Children of all ages are extremely confident in the setting, develop high self-esteem and have a very positive attitude to learning. The childminder ensures they have a wide range of activities that are fun, enjoyable and builds on their own interests and life experiences. There is an excellent balance of child and adult-led activities. Children are eager to involve the childminder in their play and develop their language skills to a good level as they chat to her and each other. Older children begin to count and recognise letters and numbers. They like to sound out the letters on the street signs and look for numbers on the front doors as they walk to and from school. They enjoy a range of craft activities and their art work is displayed. Photographs show the children using their imagination as they dress-up and build dens. They help the childminder to grow fruit and vegetables in the garden and enjoy kneading the bread which they bake and eat. They learn about the seasons as they gather the falling leaves to make a guy for bonfire night or put on their boots and delight in splashing in the puddles.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe and the dangers of traffic when out and about. The use of reins on the younger children, plus clear boundaries and expectations are effective in ensuring their overall safety. On site, the regular fire drills further promotes children's understanding of safety within the home. Children know to wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet and before their meals. Through discussions, activities and the provision of healthy snacks and meals, the childminder promotes their understanding of healthy eating and what foods are good for them. After a visit to local orchards, the children made apple crumble and pies for their tea. The regular visits to local parks and walks around their local area provides good opportunities for them to enjoy and benefit from the fresh air and regular exercise.

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	1

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	1
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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