

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY258097
Inspection date	04/11/2009
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband, adult son and two younger children, aged 13 and 7 years in a village near Barnsley, South Yorkshire. The house is close to local schools, shops and other amenities. The ground floor rooms of the house are used for childminding and the bathroom on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The family has a cat, but contact with children is limited.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children in the early years age range and four older children. The childminder is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and has completed their quality assurance scheme, Quality First. She has a level 3 early years qualification and is working towards level 4. She is also an approved member of the Barnsley Children Come First childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and inclusive environment, where they are very much at the heart of all the childminder does. She works extremely closely with parents, building strong partnerships with them and sharing information very effectively with them. Good links are also established with other settings involved in children's care. The childminder makes excellent use of resources, both within the home and wider community, to support children's learning. Children make good progress and show a strong sense of security within the setting. Most records, policies and procedures are maintained well, promoting children's health, safety and well-being. The childminder reflects carefully on what she does, using self-evaluation systems effectively to highlight ways in which she can further enhance existing good practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- review and amend children's records to include information about who has parental responsibility. 30/11/2009

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

- improve systems for conducting and recording risk assessments, including

- assessments for specific outings
- continue to develop partnerships with other settings involved in children's care.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection, which helps to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. She keeps her knowledge up-to-date by attending relevant training, and speaks confidently of the possible indicators of abuse. She knows the procedures to follow should she have any concerns about children in her care. Effective measures are taken around the home to maintain children's safety, but systems for recording risk assessments are general and do not include specific outings undertaken with children. Other required records, policies and procedures are mostly maintained and organised very well. The childminder carefully considers where additional written policies would be useful and routinely reviews them to ensure they reflect changes. However, records of information about minded children do not currently include details about parental responsibility, which is a breach of legal requirements.

The childminder builds excellent partnerships with parents, which helps her to meet children's individual needs successfully. Parents speak very highly of the service she provides and value the support given to them and their children. They comment in particular on her approachability and the effective arrangements she makes for sharing information with them. The childminder makes good use of initial meetings with parents to find out as much as she can about children and their starting points. Ongoing information about daily events and children's progress is shared in conversation and also through children's individual and thoughtfully presented diaries. Parents can take these home each day and include their own comments. Their contributions are also sought and included in children's development folders. The childminder finds ways of involving them as much as possible in their children's learning. For example, she asks them to send photographs of themselves, other relatives, pets and siblings and has made delightful little 'All about me' books, which children love to look at. These build links with home, help the settling in process and encourage language skills. The childminder also liaises with nursery teachers where there is shared care and attends parents' evenings at school with parents, if they request this, in order to promote continuity of care and learning. She identifies the further development of these partnerships as an area to build on in the future.

The childminder's home is very welcoming and child-centred. Children's art work is on display and good quality resources are organised well in low-level boxes, with pictorial labels, so that children can select things for themselves and make choices about their play. The childminder ensures that toys and activities are suitably adapted for different age groups and abilities, enabling all to join in together. Children use resources well, clearly benefiting from the varied range of play materials provided. The childminder attends relevant training to support her work with children who may have language and communication difficulties, making

effective use of what she learns to enhance children's experiences and help them to make progress. For example, she identifies the 'Every Child a Talker' programme as being particularly influential in helping her to develop children's language skills. Children begin to understand and appreciate different cultures and needs because the childminder chooses play materials which reflect positive images and provide a stimulus for discussion. Excellent use is made of resources within the wider environment, such as a local toy loan scheme, children's libraries and park ranger activities, to extend the range and variety of play experiences for children. She actively seeks out funding, equipment and new ideas to further enhance her provision.

The childminder is deeply committed to the continuous development of her service. She is constantly evaluating and reflecting on what she does, working closely with her network coordinator, childminder colleagues, parents and children to inform this process. She takes care to address recommendations made at previous inspections, including the improvement of recording systems for parental consents and the development of her own knowledge in relation to the care of children with additional needs. She has attended a very wide range of training to enhance her practice and further improve outcomes for children. Excellent use is made of a range of self-evaluation systems to help the childminder to identify and act upon areas for future development.

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

Children are secure and happy in the childminder's care. They build trusting relationships with her and enjoy contact with members of her family. She interacts warmly with them, sitting beside them as they play, talking and listening to them. Children are relaxed and at ease with her; they move confidently around the home and are familiar with daily routines. She shows children that they are valued and important to her by displaying their art work and making positive comments about their achievements. Even the youngest children begin to develop a sense of responsibility as they help to carry plates into the kitchen or show concern for children who are upset. House rules are positively worded and agreed with children, so that they are clear about what is expected of them. Children respond well to her guidance and their behaviour is good.

Children's safety, health and well-being are given high priority at the setting. The childminder protects children from the spread of infection by maintaining good standards of hygiene around the home and encouraging children to follow safe hygiene practice. She recognises signs of tiredness in children and plans her day so that there are quiet times when they can rest and sleep comfortably. Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which helps to keep them fit and well. The childminder has become a volunteer 'walk leader' for her childminding group, which involves planning walks and outings in the surrounding area, to encourage children's enjoyment of exercise. They take part in activities, such as treasure and bug hunts, followed by a healthy picnic. Children practise physical skills as they use large equipment in the park or play on wheeled toys in the childminder's garden. Indoors, they dance and move their bodies in response

to music, rhymes and songs. Children are encouraged to eat nourishing foods, which further promotes their good health. Parents currently send packed lunches for their children, but snacks of fresh fruit are offered each day and children learn about the importance of healthy eating as they take part in activities, such as making pictures of their favourite fruits and vegetables.

Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder supports them well and ensures that they take part in a balanced range of activities each day. She makes sensitive observations of them as they play, which helps her to understand their needs and interests. These observations are used to guide her planning of activities and to identify how she can help children make the next steps in their learning. Children's development folders are well presented, including a tracking system, which enables her to see if there are any specific areas to build on.

Children enjoy the time they spend with her and begin to form friendships with others in the group. They develop a strong sense of their own identity as the childminder talks with them and shares photographs of them and their families. They become confident to explore their environment and to use resources to develop their own play. For example, they find a collection of colourful silk scarves in one of their toy drawers and have great fun draping them over their heads and noticing how their faces change colour. Younger children return repeatedly to toys that interest them, such as a wooden shape sorter board. They begin to solve simple problems as they work out how to make the shapes move around and fall through the correct holes. The childminder effectively supports children's language development as she shares stories and puppets with children. They excitedly make buzzing sounds like the bees in the story and fly the bee puppets around the room. Children like to paint, draw and make collages for display; they have been making autumn leaves and handprints to hang on their big tree and they collect leaves and seeds during their walks. They learn about nature as they plant seeds and help to look after them, taking photographs themselves to show how their plants have grown. Older children develop skills in using technology as they access the computer and camera while little ones use equipment such as an old telephone as part of their role play. Importantly, children develop a strong sense of security and an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves safe as they play and as part of routines and activities. They take part in regular fire drills, learn how to cross roads safely and about stranger danger. The childminder encourages children to be aware of hazards in their environment through making effective use of resources, such as simple pictorial risk assessment cards she has made for them and through discussion and reminders. As a result, children are taking an active role in identifying hazards and learning how to behave in a way that is safe for themselves and others.

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	1

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	1
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	1
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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