

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY331774
Inspection date	01/10/2009
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2006. She lives with her 10 year old daughter in the Yarm area of Stockton on Tees. The whole of the ground floor, the first floor bathroom, and small bedroom of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five to 11 years old. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and nurseries and attends regular toddler groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child, and meets their learning and developmental needs well. She gets to know each child well and provides a secure and stimulating environment for them. The childminder promotes children's welfare successfully and implements robust safeguarding practices. She enjoys mostly effective cooperative relationships with parents and others where relevant. The childminder understands her strengths and weaknesses, and has a good capacity to make continuous improvement and sustain quality standards, demonstrated by undertaking training and sharing good practice with advisors and other childcare providers.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the systems for planning and recording children's next steps in their learning and development.
- continue to develop partnerships with other settings involved in children's care, in order to promote continuity of care and 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. Children's safety is further protected as arrangements for their safe arrival and

collection are well managed. Decisive action is taken should the suitability of any adult be called into question, with safe contingency arrangements in place to ensure children are well cared for in any emergency. Carefully completed records also closely monitor children's attendance. 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.

The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to providing a good quality service to children and families. She makes good use of self-evaluation systems to identify areas for future development and improvement. She has attended a number of training events and her commitment is ongoing. This contributes to further developing her already good childcare practice. The childminder has addressed the recommendations made at her previous inspection by taking steps to increase children's awareness of different cultures by providing resources which reflect positive images of diversity. She has also improved the procedures for recording complaints in line with changes to regulations. 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. They receive copies of the childminder's written policies and written daily diaries, giving them a good insight into the way she operates. Their views about the setting are sought by means of regular discussion. Parents comment very positively about the childminders 'professionalism', 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. Parents have opportunities to comment in children's development folders which fully involves 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. Children express themselves freely, secure in the knowledge, they will receive a consistent, warm response. Their behaviour is well supported and there is close interaction between the childminder and those she cares for. This is because she knows children well, and uses very good techniques to help build their confidence and self-esteem. She speaks positively about how she would support a child with additional needs, or who speaks English as an additional language. 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. She makes effective use of her local toy resource library.

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. Children's overall learning and development is well supported. Their combined experiences inside and outside the childminder's home provide them with a stimulating, well-balanced range of play and learning activities. This helps them make good progress towards meeting their early learning goals. 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 children are currently very interested in frogs after they were found in the garden. Children researched and found the creature was a 'common frog' due to markings behind the ears. This activity was extended further as children had a competition to find the best name for the frogs. All this work is attractively displayed within the setting giving children a clear sense of belonging. The childminder notes which areas of learning she is covering in children's profile records. However, she is not yet fully confident in consistently building links between her observations and her planning for individual children and their next steps in development. In addition to her written observations, the children and herself complete a large 'floor book', which documents group activities within the setting such as, visits and trips they have taken part in. As well as photographs children write captions and draw pictures about what they have enjoyed and experienced on the days out.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are very well supported. The childminder uses excellent communication skills with children and is conversant with a range of techniques to support children as they learn to read and begin to problem solve. Her patience and willingness to listen and respond to children's needs helps them feel valued and secure. Their happy chatter with the childminder during activities is a testament to their clear enjoyment. Children snuggle in closely as they listen to their favourite stories. Their knowledge and understanding of the world around them is developing well. They talk to the childminder about the needs of others as they take part in fund raising activities, and celebrate different festivals extended with food tasting activities. Children are eager to take part in activities, responding with excitement to the childminder's suggestions. Children have varied experiences outside the home. They visit local railways museums, Nature World and Eco Centre where they have fun exploring and investigating mini beasts. 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 love to construct with a purpose using their imagination to make 'traffic jams' and 'pyramids' with bricks, and say they have been 'problem solving' at nursery.

Children's overall good health is positively promoted by the childminder. Good hygiene standards, combined with a well developed sickness policy, helps ensure the risk of infection and the spreading of any contagious illnesses are minimised. A

current first aid certificate also helps ensure she is well equipped in the event of any emergency. All required records relating to children's overall health are of a good standard. Children are developing a good awareness of healthy living. They learn good hygiene practice during their daily routines, and enjoy nutritious meals and snacks which are freshly prepared by the childminder. The childminder instigates conversations about healthy eating at meal times, and children confidently talk about the fruit and vegetables they enjoy. As part of activity planning children recently planted cress and carrots which promotes their understanding further about healthy eating. Children also participated in 'Dental Health Day' as they begin to understand about the importance of looking after your teeth. The childminder understands the importance of fresh air and exercise and ensures children experience a variety of trips out on a daily basis. These include visits to open spaces, country parks, toddler groups, and play parks. Children particularly enjoy feeding the animals at the local park. Their safety is assured as they are appropriately restrained in in car seats when travelling by car. Furthermore, children are made aware of the importance of not talking to strangers and of the potential dangers of the road. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis and any problems recorded. Activity planning also incorporated a trip to the local fire station to raise children's awareness further about fire safety.

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

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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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