

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/12/2009
Inspector	Emma Bright
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 1996. She lives with her husband and four children aged 12, 15, 18 and 22 in a village close to Royston, Cambridgeshire. The premises are accessed via a small step. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, of these no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding five children in this age group, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children, and attends the local parent and toddler group. The family has three dogs, three chickens, one goldfish and one hamster. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder deploys her resources well so that children can make independent choices and become active learners. She provides a broad range of stimulating and challenging learning opportunities for each child and this enables them to make very good progress in their learning and development. The childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child and effectively promotes inclusive practice so that children feel secure and valued. She has established very good working relationships with parents and this ensures children's individual needs are very well met. Effective systems are in place to evaluate the care and education provided which enables the childminder to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of information about children's learning so that parents have further opportunities to contribute to the record of their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her role in safeguarding children; she has attended advanced training in child protection and is clear about the procedures to put into practise when necessary. This knowledge is underpinned by

a clear policy which is shared with parents and this means children are kept safe from harm. The childminder is very well organised; clear documentation and good record keeping promotes the safety and welfare of the children and underpins the good quality care offered. Risk assessments are clear and detailed to ensure that hazards are identified and minimised; rigorous daily checks further improve children's safety. The childminder carefully supervises children as they play, making sure her home is secure so that children cannot leave unattended.

The childminder has very good relationships with parents; she gathers clear information from them so that she knows about children's individual interests and needs, and can provide a consistency of care. Very positive written feedback demonstrates parents very high regard for the childminder and the service she offers. Clear written policies and procedures are professionally presented to share with parents so that they know about the childminding provision. The childminder is sensitive to children's individual personalities when settling them in her home and this ensures a smooth transition between home and the childminding home. The childminder has begun to develop systems to promote partnership working with other providers who also care for the children. This ensures that continuity of care and education is maintained.

The childminder organises space and play resources effectively to meet children's needs; she has a very good understanding of children's individual abilities and this enables her to provide play experiences and activities to support each child's growing skills. Resources are checked regularly to ensure they are safe for children to play with. The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of child development and is very well qualified. She reflects on her practice and demonstrates a clear commitment to continual improvement. For example, she has attended a wide range of training opportunities to develop her provision further and to improve her practice in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

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

The childminder has a very good understanding of how young children learn and this enables her to provide challenging and stimulating experiences and activities to support each child's learning and development. She takes children's interests and stage of development into careful consideration when planning activities to ensure all areas of learning are very well promoted. The childminder records each child's achievements through a balance of photographs, examples of work and observations. This effective system of record keeping demonstrates that children are making good progress in their learning and development. However, parents do not have full opportunity to contribute to these records in order to share what they know about their children's progress.

Children learn about the world around them and their local community as they visit activity groups and local amenities so that they have good opportunities to socialise and develop relationships with their peers. The childminder encourages children's language skills through sensitive interaction and this enables children to

be confident communicators. For example, she uses 'baby signing' to help babies communicate their needs and this effectively supports their emotional development. Children are curious as they observe how the white icing changes when they add food colouring. The childminder develops children's learning by introducing mathematical concepts such as counting and number recognition in their play. For example, children count how many biscuits they have decorated and they calculate how many more 'sleeps' until they can hang up their Christmas stockings. These simple activities lay the foundations to help develop children's skills for the future.

Children's independence and confidence is promoted as the childminder organises toys and resources where they can access them, allowing them to be active learners and make choices about their play. Children have good opportunities to be creative in a range of art and craft activities, such as painting and making collages from a range of materials. The childminder values their work by displaying it for everyone to see and enjoy. They explore their imagination in role play, dressing up as doctors and giving medicine to their 'patients'. The childminder provides an inclusive environment where each child is valued and they are clearly relaxed in her nurturing care as they cuddle together whilst sharing stories. The childminder has good strategies in place to care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Children learn about responsible behaviour; they share and are kind to each other because the childminder is consistent and promotes positive behaviour. The childminder ensures that children have varied opportunities for physical exercise and they benefit from lots of fresh air on their walks to local amenities. The childminder encourages children to have a healthy attitude towards food because she provides a good range of nutritious snacks, as well as ensuring that all children have independent access to drinks. The childminder helps children to learn how to keep safe, both in the home and on outings; they learn about how to cross the road safely and they know that they should not approach other dogs unless the childminder says it is safe to do so.

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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Met