

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	30/11/2009
Inspector	Melanie Calway
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 six, nine, 12 and 13, in a village close to the town of March, in Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog, two cats and a fish tank. Guinea pigs, rabbits and chickens are kept outside.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding six children in this age group. She also offers care to children over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder works with an assistant one day a week and her husband is also registered as an assistant in case of emergencies.

The childminder walks to the local school to take and collect children and attends a local parent toddler group, a childminding group, the library, local parks and shops. She is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is also a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of funding for early education for three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are well met because the childminder has a very good knowledge of their stage of development and uses sensitive observations of their play and learning to help them to progress across all the areas of learning. Children's views are taken into account and they make a positive contribution to the life of the setting. Information is provided for parents about the service and a regular two-way exchange of information about children's care and learning takes place. There is also effective communication with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) about individual children's learning to ensure continuity and progression. The childminder uses a range of methods to reflect on her practice and identify areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the record of risk assessment so that it covers anything with which a child may come into contact, including a separate assessment for each type of outing
- develop the partnership with parents, involving them further in their children's continuous learning and development by encouraging them to contribute to the learning records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect. The childminder has completed training on safeguarding and is aware of her responsibility to refer any concerns she may have about children's welfare. She makes parents aware of this duty by pointing out her safeguarding policy and records any existing injuries to protect children. Her assistant has also recently attended safeguarding training and passes on updated information to the childminder. The childminder has conducted a risk assessment of her home and carries out daily checks on the premises to ensure that they are safe for children. Necessary safety equipment is in place and the childminder supervises children well. However, the record of risk assessment does not cover all aspects of the environment and as a result some issues are not identified. The childminder takes measures to ensure children's safety on outings and takes emergency contacts and any necessary equipment. She has included most outings in her record of risk assessment but has not kept a separate record for each and every outing. The childminder helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe because she gives them very good explanations about safety issues as they arise, for example, why they need to pull their scarf off from one end, why they should sit nicely at the table and why they should not touch the bread maker when it is hot. Their understanding is also enhanced by topics such as 'people who help us' and because they are encouraged to help in forming and discussing the house rules. Children are protected from the risk of fire as the childminder practises a fire drill at regular intervals and explains to children why they need to do this.

The childminder has completed a self-evaluation which has helped her to identify some areas for improvement. She also undertakes a range of training courses to keep her knowledge up to date and belongs to her local childminding network and a childminding group which provides her with new ideas. Recommendations from the last inspection have been met. She also discusses her practice with her assistant and exchanges ideas. She actively seeks parents' views of her service. The childminder treats every child as an individual and makes them feel valued and involved in the setting. She encourages children to develop respect and understanding for each other and actively challenges stereotypes. Steps are taken to ensure that children with additional needs can be included in the setting. Resources are deployed effectively and children are able to choose from a wide range of appropriate play equipment, which is stored at child level and labelled with words and pictures to develop children's choice and independence.

The childminder provides parents with information about the service in her policies and procedures and on the parents' notice board. Children's records of learning are available for parents to see and the childminder goes through them at regular intervals and some parents add their own contributions. Daily diaries also keep parents in touch with what children have been doing and how they are developing. Good information is gained from parents, when children start, about their starting points so that the childminder knows what children can already do so that this can be built on. Parents are not yet systematically contributing to the records their own

observations of children's development so that they are fully involved in the assessment process. The childminder has good links with the local pre-school and has effective systems to share information about individual children's learning and development.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development. The childminder makes detailed observations of their play and learning and uses these to help her plan the next steps for their progress across all the areas of learning. The 'All about me' books give the childminder a very good knowledge of children's developmental starting points so that she can build on what they already know and can do. Children's interests and learning styles are taken into account and the childminder uses children's preoccupations to help them to settle and involve them in the setting. Activities which interest particular children are extended, for example, a toy pet shop is set up to develop a theme on animals which is initiated by children's interests. Visits to an allotment are set up in response to children who have their own allotments and a theme on growing food is developed. The childminder talks and listens to children sensitively, using open-ended questions, to extend their learning and develop their thinking skills. Children communicate confidently with the childminder who talks to them and develops their growing vocabulary. Activities such as making bread in the bread-maker provide rich learning opportunities. Children are able to put the ingredients in and taste the powder to see if it is flour or sugar. They operate the machine using the buttons and look at the numbers on the screen. The childminder says 'look it's a number three'. Children are able to watch the machine churning and observe the changes that are taking place. They are fully involved and motivated by this activity going back again and again to watch the changes and laughing as they say 'it's making a noise'. Children select activities independently and the childminder sets up some activities to help children with particular skills, for example, a memory game is set up to help children remember animal noises. Children learn about the world around them through using technology, playing outside and collecting eggs or sweeping up leaves. Projects such as the 'people who help us' book help children to learn about their own community. Independence is promoted well with children learning to put coats and boots on to go out and demonstrating pleasure when they succeed. Children's views are taken seriously and they help to make posters and form rules which are then displayed. The 'All about me topic' encourages them to respect each others' similarities and differences and boosts their confidence and self-esteem.

Children's health is promoted well. They enjoy plenty of outside play all year round and walk to the local school and pre-school. They develop physical skills playing outside, pedalling along the pathway or using the climbing frame. Healthy outdoor activities are available such as working on the allotment. Good hygiene is observed and children are involved in making posters about the importance of washing. Parents provide snacks and meals and are encouraged to provide healthy options. The childminder talks to children about keeping healthy and topics, such as growing their own food, enhances their understanding of how to live a healthy

lifestyle. They brush their teeth after lunch and visit the dentist to learn about how to keep their teeth healthy. All of the required documentation, policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children's good health is successfully promoted. Children learn to keep safe as the childminder explains dangers to them at a level which they can understand. They learn to take responsibility as they understand why they need to practise the fire drill and why they need to obey the rules when out. Children are fully involved in the setting and able to make their own contributions. This enhances their self-esteem. Children are treated as individuals. As a result children are very confident, motivated and well-behaved. Children are learning useful skills for the future as they learn to be independent, become familiar with technology and develop in all the different areas of 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

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	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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