

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY261438
Inspection date	16/12/2009
Inspector	Hazel Christine White

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 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and seven years in a residential area of Northampton in Northamptonshire. The premises are accessible via a sloping path. The whole of the ground floor and some upstairs rooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Children also regular attend local carer and toddler groups. The family has a dog, Harris hawk and a ferret.

The childminder is registered to care for maximum of five children under eight and is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently six children on roll, two of whom are within the early years age range and attend on a part-time basis. 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.

Children are happy, settled and thriving in a well organised, very welcoming and child-friendly environment. Their learning is fully supported through a wide range of valuable first-hand learning experiences and purposeful play. The childminder effectively promotes inclusion and treats all children with equal concern. Their safety is protected extremely well through a range of policies, procedures and everyday practices. A superb partnership is in place with parents and the childminder continues to establish working relationships with other early years providers. She is committed to developing her practice and has identified some areas for improvement, although self-evaluation systems are in their infancy.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve partnerships with other settings by sharing relevant information regarding children's learning and development
- lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well because the childminder has a thorough understanding of child protection procedures. Ongoing training ensures that she is well aware of the possible signs of abuse and harm and that she has a clear knowledge of what to do should she be concerned about a child in her care. Referral details and local procedures are exceptionally well organised and readily

available. Comprehensive written risk assessments are in place and the childminder carries out daily safety checks on her home, outings and any resources used for minding.

The childminder has formed superb partnerships with parents and they are kept very well informed about their child's care and activities, as well as their progress. They chat on a daily basis and questionnaires, letters and thank you cards confirm how happy they are with the service she provides. They refer to the childminder's caring, professional attitude and the safe, homely and happy environment. Parents receive a welcome pack which contains all relevant information about the childminding service, including, all policies and procedures which inform the childminder's practice. They have very good access to their child's 'learning journey', which contains both written information and photographic evidence. Some children also attend other settings that deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder is forging positive links with these settings and shares some information about children's individual needs, however, this partnership is not yet fully effective so that she can build on children's learning and experiences, in order to provide consistency.

The childminder is well organised and maintains accurate and up-to-date records, which assist her in keeping children safe, such as accident and medication records. She has recently reviewed documentation and all policies and procedures to ensure that they fully support her practice. The childminder is in the early stages of devising systems to monitor and evaluate her childcare provision which will focus on outcomes for children. She has a growing understanding of her own her strengths and areas for improvement and is beginning to recognise the value of including the views of others during this process. She demonstrates a strong desire and commitment towards continually improving her service and regularly attends training to enhance her knowledge and further influence her practice.

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

Children benefit enormously from a very stimulating and child-friendly learning environment and from the childminder's secure knowledge of how to develop learning through play. They are confident and very happy in their environment, freely choosing toys and equipment and spending quality time forming strong relationships with the childminder and their peers. Their progress is very well promoted as the childminder plans purposeful play opportunities and first-hand learning experiences which are both adult-led and child-initiated. She is fully aware of each child's individual needs and effectively records ongoing observations of the children's progress. Evidence is both written and photographic and these 'learning journeys' clearly identify children's next steps so that their learning is fully supported and extended.

Children have access to a wide range of excellent quality resources that help promote their all-round development. Toys and equipment are stored in various places around the home and a selection is put out for children to choose from on a daily basis. Children know what is available and are at ease to ask for items that

they cannot see or reach. Areas of the home are well organised to enable children to play in comfort and safety. The childminder encourages children to become active and inquisitive learners through asking them open-ended questions and joining in with their spontaneous play.

Children cuddle up next to her when they listen to stories and have their favourites. They relate things that happen in the book to people in their own families, for example, 'my grandma makes macaroni cheese'. They enjoy singing songs, particularly 'Twinkle little star' and have in-depth conversations on the toy phone during role play, to people that are close to them. Children visit the farm where they collect eggs and feed ducks and are fascinated by the childminder's Harris Hawk and ferret. Nature walks enable children to discover insects, birds and wildlife and they discuss the changes in the seasons and weather. Children enjoy regular visits to various groups where they have many opportunities to socialise and meet new friends and to take part in a broad variety of creative activities.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe because the childminder sets very clear boundaries and explains to children why house rules are in place. For example, they know that they must not walk around with drinks and food because of spillages and listen carefully to instructions when they are crossing the road. Children behave in a manner that is supportive of their learning. They are confident, self-assured and are developing a very good understanding of the needs of others. For example, learning to share and take turns and show consideration for each other. The childminder ensures that children know about her expectations for their behaviour and manners are actively encouraged. Children are beginning to develop an understanding of the wider world as they talk about and celebrate some cultural festivals and visit local amenities. The childminder raises their awareness through everyday discussions and ensuring that children have access to a suitable range of resources that portray positive images of diversity. As a result children are starting to learn about differences and develop a respect for themselves and others.

Well-established daily routines ensure that children develop good hygiene practices, they are gently reminded to wash their hands before meals to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children learn to make healthy choices about food and drink through excellent support and encouragement. They learn about healthy lifestyles as they talk together about eating fresh fruit to give them energy and understand that exercise is good for them as it makes bones and muscles strong. Children have daily opportunities to play in the fresh air and confidently ride wheeled toys, negotiate the steps on the slide and have fun running in the park. Children receive healthy meals and snacks that are prepared by their parents. In addition they have lots of fruit and raw vegetables in-between meals and drinking water is readily available to keep them hydrated. All children enjoy a very sociable lunchtime, sitting around the table, chatting about their morning.

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	1
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	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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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