

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	402993
Inspection date	30/10/2009
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst
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 has been registered since 1999. She lives with her husband and adult family, in Hexham, Northumberland. The whole 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 and is currently minding three children in the early years age range. The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder cares for children on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8am to 6pm. 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 works hard to ensure the needs of individual children are well met. This is achieved through effective two-way communication with parents combined with a good understanding of each child's background and requirements. By acting as a positive role model she fosters a positive attitude to diversity, encouraging children to develop respect for individual and differing needs as well as confidence in themselves. The childminder regularly reviews her practice and has a clear understanding of her strengths and areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider recording children's next steps in their developmental folder to help clearly monitor and track their progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded in the childminder's care as her knowledge of child protection is good. She is fully aware of her responsibility in promoting children's welfare and understands what action to take should she have concerns. The childminder has developed a good understanding of the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and this is reflected in the detailed range of policies and procedures which she has in place and which underpin her practice. Robust procedures for recording attendance, medication administration, accidents and allergies, further protect the welfare of the children she cares for. The childminder has a positive attitude to continuing professional development, and clearly understands the importance of ensuring her knowledge is kept up-to-date.

She has recently completed some short training courses, such as safeguarding children, introduction to the EYFS and is currently working towards a National Vocational Qualification in childcare. She also holds a current paediatric first aid certificate, as required by the EYFS. Detailed, regularly reviewed risk assessments ensure the suitability and safety of indoor and outdoor furniture, toys and equipment. This, combined with appropriate supervision and safety equipment, minimises potential risks to children.

The childminder has developed strong, effective links with parents and ensures the ongoing two-way flow of information about children's progress and achievements. She takes time to give verbal feedback to parents at the end of the day and there is a good daily diary system in place for children. Parents receive copies of the childminder's policies and procedures. Children's files are always available for parents to see and she encourages feedback from them regarding content. Parents have positive views about the childminder and the service she provides. They particularly value the close relationship that the childminder builds with the children and feel greatly reassured when they see how happy their children are in her care. The sharing of good practice with other local childminders, combined with feedback from service users, ensures the childminder is continually reviewing and evaluating her practice. As a result, she has a good understanding of her strengths and current areas for development.

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

The childminder plans a varied range of enjoyable and challenging experiences based on the daily needs and interests of the children in her care. She works closely with parents to collect relevant information about what children can do and enjoy before they start, and this helps her to establish clear starting points for each area of learning. Ongoing progress is then carefully monitored through an effective system of observational assessments, which are clearly matched to the expectations of the early learning goals and well supported by photographic evidence. However, whilst it is clear that the childminder then uses these observations to identify learning priorities, she is not consistently recording this in the children's developmental files.

Children are clearly settled at the childminder's home and they receive plenty of meaningful praise and appropriate support to raise their self-esteem and confidence. She plans and provides a range of stimulating and interesting activities for them, both in and out of the home. Activities are purposeful and promote learning and development well. For example, a simple board game effectively encourages a wide range of skills, such as recognising numbers; counting, understanding of mathematical vocabulary, shape and colour. This also promotes personal and social skills as the children understand the need to share and take turns. The close involvement in the children's play allows the childminder valuable opportunities to observe them. As a result, she is aware of their progress and individual achievements. The childminder provides children with a good range of resources to facilitate their creativity. For example, after collecting twigs from the woods, the childminder helps and encourages them to use different tools, such as

scissors and glue spreaders to create their hedgehog model. Children's communication skills are promoted well through the lively conversation that takes place. The children talk and listen to the childminder and develop effective communication skills in the process. As well as this, the children look at and listen to a good range of story books which promotes literacy skills.

Children enjoy a good range of fun activities which contribute to their health and well-being. Each day the childminder plans both indoor and outdoor activities which help promote children's physical development and help them gain increasing control over their bodies, for example, visits to the local parks, the farm and to the woods. This, combined with the provision of healthy, nutritious snacks and meals which include lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, encourages children to learn about making healthy lifestyle choices. The childminder achieves a good balance between busy and quieter times for younger children, having a flexible routine which enables them to sleep or rest when they are tired. Children develop a good awareness of how to stay safe through adherence to effective road safety procedures, and the regular undertaking of fire drills. This is further enhanced through their visit to the local fire station where children have opportunities to talk to the firemen and understand how their role helps them.

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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