

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	24/11/2009
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 1992. She lives with her husband in a bungalow on the outskirts of Bishop Auckland. The whole of the property is used for childminding. There is a large garden for outdoor play. The childminder cares for children on weekdays from 6.30am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year.

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 five children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the childminders home. The experienced childminder provides a child-centred environment where children take part in a wide range of activities covering all areas of learning. She has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and as a result, children are making good progress in their learning and development. The childminder demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting an inclusive environment where children's individual care needs and well-being are promoted well. She implements effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the care and learning she provides, this ensures that continual improvements are made.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop procedures to use information gathered from parents about their children's starting points to support progression towards the early learning goals
- develop further the planning of activities to ensure that they take into account the needs, interests and stages of development of all of the children whilst providing opportunities to value children's own ideas.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has very effective procedures in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting. All adults living and working in the household are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability to work with children. The childminder demonstrates a genuine commitment to attending further training and has completed a wide range of courses since her previous inspection, including a

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in child care, child protection and food hygiene and safety. This further promotes her very good understanding of how to effectively safeguard children. Public liability insurance, the Ofsted certificate and first aid certificate, are prominently displayed for parents. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place, along with daily and monthly checks of all areas and equipment, this ensures that the childminder is vigilant about keeping children safe.

Areas used in the childminder's home are well organised. Children's play opportunities are promoted through the effective organisation of space, time and resources. The children benefit from a dedicated playroom which has a wide range of toys and resources available, covering all areas of learning. Child friendly storage systems which are clearly labelled, help promote independence and allow children to make choices about their learning and play. The childminder knows the children well and their differing backgrounds are respected. Through a good range of resources and activities, children are encouraged to learn about the wider world and to respect difference.

The childminder demonstrates a genuine commitment to providing high quality child care and learning. Effective procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. This includes discussing practice with her assistants, using the Ofsted self-evaluation form and working closely with the childminding network. Questionnaires are used to good effect to gather feedback from parents, who speak very highly of the care and learning their children receive. As a result, the childminder has a good understanding of her areas for development. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been positively addressed and implemented. For example, the childminder has been extremely proactive in providing a wider range of activities to help children to learn about the wider world. This helps to promote outcomes for children.

Children benefit from positive relationships between the childminder and parents. Parents are invited for introductory visits to the setting where the childminder discusses with them how she works and shows copies of her policies and procedures. This helps to ensure that parents are well-informed about the setting. Before the children attend, the childminder gathers all relevant information about the children's individual care needs, such as diet and medication requirements. However, limited information is currently gathered about the children's starting points in relation to the early learning goals. This makes it more difficult to track children's individual progress. Appropriate procedures to share information, such as verbal feedback and access to children's observation records helps to keep parents informed about the care and learning their child receives. The childminder has developed close relationships with other providers of the EYFS, for example, she goes on teddy bears picnics with local nurseries. She has procedures to share information about children's individual learning and development with them.

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

The childminder has a secure understanding of the EYFS. She is an experienced childminder and uses her knowledge to provide a wide variety of activities, which cover all areas of learning. She implements appropriate procedures to observe the children and identify next steps in their learning. However, these are not used effectively to inform future planning and ensure that activities are based on all children's individual learning and development needs. Nevertheless, the wide variety of activities and commitment to promoting children's learning, ensures that children are making good progress in their learning and development.

Children have good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills and problem solving abilities through every day activities. For example, the childminder encourages them to count how many cups they will need for their tea party, identify shapes and count teddies. The children are making good progress with their social skills and are building confidence, as they have opportunities to visit different groups and mix with other children. They chat animatedly and confidently with visitors about what they are doing and are keen to include them in their play. The children participate in outdoor activities on a regular basis, including visits to the beach and the farm, as well as a wide range of physical activities such as going for walks and playing in the garden. The childminder provides a wide range of creative activities for children, for example, they paint, dress up and make snowmen out of cotton wool. However, sometimes, the activities do not fully support children to further develop their own ideas and learn skills for themselves. For example, the childminder tells them where to stick the wool and puts some of the glue on for them. She encourages children of all ages to use information and communication technology, including electronic games and a computer; this helps children to develop confidence in using a mouse and keyboard and promotes their skills for the future.

Children's understanding of keeping themselves safe and healthy is extremely well promoted. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children are safe and follow healthy lifestyles. The childminder provides an extremely well organised, child-friendly, clean environment for the children. Excellent use is made of the garden for physical play and engaging the children in activities such as, planting seeds, picking apples and growing vegetables. The childminder fully understands the importance of providing healthy and balanced meals and children confidently talk about how fruit is good for them. Planned activities such as baking and cooking are used to promote a variety of learning experiences, including weighing food, mixing and rolling, along with further developing children's understanding of healthy eating. Hygiene practices are very good, posters are clearly displayed to promote children's awareness of good hygiene and the childminder implements consistent routines. As a result, children know to wash their hands before snack and clearly recognise their individual hand towels. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about staying safe through fun and well planned activities, such as trips to the fire station and practicing regular fire drills. The childminder makes very good use of small traffic lights, stop signs and paper zebra crossings to support children in learning about road safety.

They take turns in changing the lights and holding the stop sign, they confidently explain to each other, 'its red now you must stop.' Children's behaviour is very good as the childminder implements clear and firm boundaries with them. She acts as a positive role model for children, ensuring they adopt good manners and providing regular praise and encouragement to help promote their self-esteem.

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