

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	01/02/2010
Inspector	Lesley Gadd
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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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 2009. She lives with her Father, niece and Mother, who is also a registered childminder, in Lowestoft, in Norfolk. Both childminder's share equal responsibility for running the childminding business. Most of the house where the childminder lives and works is used for childminding, except one bedroom upstairs and there is a fully enclosed garden area for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, not more than three may be in the early years age group. At times, when the childminder works with her co-childminder, a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time may be cared for, not more than six may be in the early years age group and no more than two may be under two years of age. The childminder is not registered to provide overnight care. The childminder is currently minding two children in the early years age group and also offers care to one child aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder collects children from local schools and pre-schools.

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 very happy and settled in the childminder's care. Their individual learning needs are met well because the childminder knows them and is able to provide activities which are positively matched to their stage of development and interests. The childminder works effectively with parents and other settings the children attend to ensure consistency of care and learning. Children's welfare is well supported although, risk assessment records do not cover everything that a child comes into contact with in the home. The childminder has started to review her service to support ongoing improvements however, systems for evaluation are not entirely secure.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop risk assessments to cover anything with which a child may come into contact, particularly the cats and upstairs areas of the house
- make further use of self-evaluation tools to consider how best to maintain and further improve the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect as the childminder and her family have the necessary clearances to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. A clear safeguarding policy is in place and the childminder has a good understanding of safeguarding procedures, being aware of her responsibility to refer any concerns she may have about children's welfare to the appropriate agencies. Children are kept safe within the home. The childminder supervises the children well and conducts daily checks to ensure that the environment is suitable for children. Written risk assessments are completed however, these do not cover everything that a child comes into contact with particularly, the upstairs of the premises where children rest and use the toilet facilities and contact with the families cats. Children are protected from the risk of fire as an evacuation plan is in place and has been practised to ensure that older children learn what they need to do in the event of a fire. The childminder gives regular explanations to children in the daily routine so they learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, reminding them to put away small items that may be harmful to younger children. The childminder demonstrates a firm commitment to developing her skills as she attends regular training and holds a recognised early years qualification to level three. The childminder has started to consider the strengths of the service however, self-evaluation systems are not used effectively to help consider how best to maintain and further develop the service

The environment is suitably organised to meet children's needs. Resources are stored in low level shelving and boxes to promote children's independence as they learn how to select toys and tidy them away. Child sized furniture is provided and they have plenty of space to play and move freely. The childminder has experience of working with children with additional needs and is clear about how to ensure families are supported to meet children's individual needs through accessing appropriate services.

The childminder has a good relationship with parents and exchanges information regularly. Policies and procedures outline most important aspects of the service and all the required permissions have been obtained. A daily 'talk' and written diaries provide an effective two-way method of communicating with parents about their children's progress and what they have been doing. Parents' make many positive comments about the childminder including the fact she is 'kind', 'conscientious', 'reliable' and has a 'vested interest in the' children 'she is caring for'.

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

Children's welfare and learning are well supported and they enjoy a good range of interesting activities. Children select from the resources available and the childminder plans activities based on children's interests. An example of this, includes how the children's fascination with the dark nights on the journey home

has led to activities linked to, why the dark happens?, who comes out to play in the animal kingdom when it is dark? and how torches work to shine light in the darkness?. These spontaneous activities provide good opportunities for the children to develop their knowledge about the environment, animals and technology. The childminder assesses children's skills through observations and discussion with others. This helps to form an initial picture about children's development which is then recorded in individual learning story records which show children's interests, learning needs and achievements. Activities are then planned to meet children's individual learning needs.

The childminder is kind and caring towards the children. She talks and listens to them sensitively, asking open ended questions and giving them time to respond. As a result, children communicate very confidently with her and their language skills are promoted well. Books provide good opportunities to explore early literacy ideas and children use small tools well developing their finger strength for future writing. An interesting find of a flashing badge is dissected by the child and childminder, helping to build children's knowledge about how things work. Younger children are keen to operate activity toys, developing skills with technology. Children enjoy 'chatting' with the childminder whilst mark making on paper about the colour, shape, size and number of crayons being used. This helps to develop children's early maths and knowledge of colour. Children learn to problem solve as they do puzzles or play with construction sets. Children have good opportunities to engage in creative play through sticking, drawing and painting. They learn about the natural world around them through conversations and activities with the childminder who encourages them to remember the snow on the pavements and the cold weather. Children can move about freely and the childminder uses outings to the park to provide opportunities for large physical play. Children are well behaved and show care and consideration for others as they help the childminder with the care of the cats. The childminder gives the children lots of one to one attention to make them feel valued and children are learning about difference through playing in an environment with positive images of wider society.

Children's health is promoted well. They are provided with a nutritious menu of snacks and drinks which are readily available for them to keep themselves well hydrated. Some explanations are given to enable children to begin to learn about a healthy lifestyle. Younger children are learning to wash their hands and individual towels are provided to minimise the risk of cross infection. Children feel safe and secure in the setting and have established trusting relationships with the childminder who supports their growing confidence and self-esteem through praise and positive reinforcement. They are learning skills for the future as they learn to play together and develop their language skills.

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	3
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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