

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	208561
Inspection date	12/03/2010
Inspector	Sharon Waterfall
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 two young children in Boston, Lincolnshire, an adult daughter also lives on the premises. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. Local amenities, such as schools, shops and nurseries, are within walking distance.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years, of which three may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for children both on a full-time and part-time basis. The childminder is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The family has a pet rabbit and cat.

The childminder is an inclusive childminder and is an active member of the Boston Childminder's group. She holds a Level 3 qualification in childcare and 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 is extremely positive about implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure all children meet their full potential. She actively implements a good range of activities and learning opportunities that incorporate children's interests, although her assessment systems do not always evidence her good practice. A consistency of provision is supported through strong relationships and comprehensive information sharing with parents and other professionals. Systems for self-evaluation are effective in monitoring the quality of the provision and inform realistic enhancements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- analyse observations to help plan 'what next' for individual children, highlighting their achievements or their need for further support.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's learning and welfare is promoted as the childminder has a secure knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a good understanding of her legal duties and responsibilities with regard to child protection issues and attends regular training to keep her up to date with legislation. She ensures all adults within the home are securely vetted, and she has written procedures to follow in the event that she has concerns about a child's

welfare. Safety within the home is a priority and all hazards have been identified and minimised through comprehensive risk assessments. The many types of outings the children undertake have been included, and permission is sought from parents generally about regular visits and for those further a field or special trips. All required documentation is in place, although the childminder misplaced her accident and medication records. She has obtained a replacement immediately and can demonstrate her knowledge of the correct recording and permission requirements. A range of written policies and procedures are shared with parents and they give their full consent for outings, permission to seek emergency medical treatment and provide information about who has legal responsibility for the children. These procedures fully support children's welfare and provide an excellent partnership with parents.

The childminder works effectively with other local day care providers and schools to ensure that significant information is shared regarding children's overall development. The provision is inclusive for all children as activities are adapted to meet children's individual needs. They are encouraged to be confident in making their own decisions and respecting the needs and views of their peers. Through a wide range of different cultural festivals and celebrations the children learn about diversity around the world and to respect and value the differences within people's lives. The childminder is extremely keen to improve her practice through ongoing training and seeks advice from development workers. Through self-evaluation processes she has identified realistic areas for improvement and has implemented the Early Years Foundation Stage positively over a period of time. Her involvement within local childminding groups keeps her at the forefront of childcare practice and she is proactive in accessing excellent resources to enhance her provision. Continual improvement plans for these groups support her own development and benefit children's learning.

Information from discussions with parents is welcomed and integrated into the planning. From the onset of care, parents are asked about children's starting points such as family members, favourite toys, routines and specific health or development issues. The childminder then effectively uses this information to support the children in settling into her provision. Currently parents are completing information about children's overall progression which will be used to formulate future learning plans. Parents and extended family members gave glowing references of the childminders practice, one stating that she is 'very professional and treats the child with individuality.'

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

Children confidently access the well-organised play space and make their own choices from easily accessible resources. The childminder manages her time effectively and actively supports children's play but gives them time and space to play unhindered, offering support when required. There is a balance of child-led and adult-led activities that enable the childminder to support specific development needs of the children, though she actively ensures they are involved in making decisions at all times. For example, the childminder plans a baking activity to

enable the children to make Mother's Day gifts but asks the children what they want to make and they look through a luxury baking book together. After deciding the children want to make something with chocolate, they 'read' the recipes and then go to the shops to purchase the ingredients together. These first hand experiences are continually provided for the children and give them meaning within their learning. The childminder has begun to use sensitive observations and assess children's development, although she is not using the information she gains to the best effect in identifying individualised next steps for children consistently.

The childminder uses a community allotment to maximum effect in enabling the children to learn about the natural world. The children observe the fruits and vegetables growing, and learn how to care for them; they helped to prepare and taste them and have taken some home to share with their families. The activities link into the seasons, and the children have been able to begin to understand about the world around them and basic principles of time. Whilst digging, planting and watering the children benefit from fresh air and physical activity. Discussions about the nutritional value of the produce they are growing also enables them to learn about healthy choices in their diets. The allotment also has a sensory garden so the children can use all of their senses to explore and investigate their surroundings. Imaginative play is also encouraged as there is a play house and wig-wham at the site and a wide range of physical activities for the children to enjoy. Funding has been sought to purchase microscopes, musical instruments, a weather vane and some building equipment to expand the play experiences for the children.

Language skills are developed through the constant discussions between the children and the childminder about the activities, making choices and sharing events. The children enjoy looking at some of the photographs displayed around the playroom and recall and share memories of the activities they have done previously. This activity reminds the children of some large scale painting they did which they have been waiting to dry, they excitedly run to fetch it and proudly display their achievements, and they enjoy talking about the techniques and the colours they used. Other skills for communication, language and literacy include games where the children must listen to the sounds, or songs being played and then identify the corresponding pictures on cards. They also develop turn taking, sharing and negotiating skills as they play. Their awareness of a diverse society is increasing through stories, activities and play resources. For example, they go to a Chinese restaurant to celebrate Chinese New Year and listen to stories from around the world; this helps children to recognise and respect issues relating to culture.

Problem solving and mathematical concepts are included throughout the activities as children talk about bigger and smaller, learn to recognise shapes and regularly count items. During the baking activity the children count the number of cake cases they need, weigh and measure the ingredients, identify which chocolates are the biggest or smallest and distinguish between ball and sausage shapes. They use the environment to enhance their learning, such as recognising numbers and letters in street names, house numbers and car registration plates, they also identify the colours of the passing tractors. The children have beautiful manners and are very considerate of one another. Their confidence and self-esteem are

increasing as they respond to the childminder's constant praise and encouragement and the interest and value she places on them as individuals. They are learning to respect themselves, each other and the opinions and differences of others. Children's well-being is supported as hygiene procedures are effective in limiting the spread of infection, such as individual towels for hand washing. Warm and loving relationships are formed with the childminder, and the children make good progress in her care.

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	1
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	1
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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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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