

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	550071
Inspection date	12/03/2010
Inspector	Karen Marie Tervit
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 2000. She lives with her husband and young daughter in Spennymoor. The whole ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder takes and collects children from local schools. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years of age. She is currently caring for four children in this age range on a part-time basis. The childminder's home is situated close to local shops and amenities. She is an active member of the local Childminding Network group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and development in relation to their starting points, as the childminder provides a rich and exciting learning environment, both within the home and outdoors. The childminder meets the needs of the children in her care exceptionally well, as she has a very good awareness of their individual abilities. Extremely positive relationships with the parents and other providers of Early Years Foundation Stage are in place. The childminder is constantly evaluating her strengths and looking for areas to develop further. She is committed and passionate about continually improving her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further develop the systems already in place to encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning and development records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well protected. The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as the procedures to be followed in the event of any concerns. She has recently completed her Level 2 safeguarding training. Children are further protected by a large number of written policies and procedures, which are effectively implemented and shared with parents. Their welfare is assured as the childminder and her husband have had suitable checks completed. The childminder has recently renewed her first aid certificate, enabling her to respond quickly and effectively to any accidents. There is a comprehensive record of risk assessments, which clearly highlights potential hazards within the home and on outings.

The childminder is highly professional. Children's play opportunities are maximised through the highly effective organisation of space, time and resources. For example, she sets out activities in her living room to cover all the areas of learning. The childminder is enthusiastic and passionate about driving forward with improvements to ensure better outcomes for children. She demonstrates an extremely positive attitude towards training, having recently completed a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in childcare. She demonstrates a genuine commitment to working with other childminders to raise standards of childcare and is proactive in identifying areas for development to promote outcomes for children. The recommendation raised at the previous inspection has been positively addressed. She now shares all her policies with parents and ensures they are aware of any updates or developments in them. Toys are stored at a low level, enabling children to make confident choices about their learning and play. The childminder displays children's work very prominently in the hallway, where children and parents can easily see it and comment on it. This, along with posters and photographs, helps to promote children's sense of belonging and self-esteem. The childminder is proactive in ensuring that she provides an inclusive environment so that all children can develop to their full potential. Excellent partnerships with external agencies, such as the local authority and Sure Start workers, further ensure that children's individual needs are met exceptionally well.

The childminder promotes equality and diversity remarkably well, as she helps the children gain an insight into differences by making available an excellent range of resources and thoughtful activities. For example, they learn simple French songs and how to say hello in different languages. Feedback from parents and Sure Start workers is extremely positive. They comment on the wonderful range of quality activities and experiences children receive. Daily contact and sharing of information both verbally and through the excellent displays is a key strength of the childminder, ensuring parents are secure about the care and support their children receive on a daily basis. The childminder promotes a flexible service to meet parents' childcare needs. This ensures they feel confident in the continuity of care in place. The childminder is considering ways in which to involve parents in contributing to their children's learning and development records. The regular newsletters keep them up-to-date, such as with any changes or the impact of any training the childminder has attended to improve her practice. The childminder is actively involved in the community along with the children. The links with the nursery and other facilities are very good.

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

The childminder has attended training on the Early Years Foundation Stage, and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the learning and development requirements as well as a commitment to implementing them exceedingly well. Lively meaningful observations of children are carried out so the next steps for their learning can be clearly identified. She is highly skilled at recognising and maximising learning opportunities. Children are very settled and at ease in the childminder's care. They make confident choices about their play and freely

approach her for reassurance or to involve her in their play. The childminder helps and supports children extremely well. This results in children making excellent progress in relation to their starting points. The childminder works extremely closely with other professionals, parents and children to promote children's development in all areas. For example, the childminder is skilled in asking the children many open-ended questions, which is very supportive for their speech development and confidence. Children develop their speaking and listening skills through the excellent ongoing opportunities to interact with others and by positive encouragement by the childminder for them to talk. She encourages them to repeat words to her and provides beautiful scrapbooks of photographs for them to look at and comment on.

The outside area is very well resourced and set out to offer a rich, varied and imaginative range of learning experiences which extend from indoors. This enables the children to use a variety of tools, such as rollers and brushes to paint and mark make with. Everyday activities, such as walking in the park during the recent inclement weather, turn into an exciting adventure as they sail their boats and ducks in the large puddles or watch the water swirling down the drains. Indoors the tent offers a quiet area to read a book with each other or on their own. Children often do their own observations, taking photographs of their achievements, such as building high towers and making their own comments about them. They take part in a wide range of outings to places such as the library or the local nursery where they enjoy exciting activities such as designing their own tee shirts or watching the puppet show. Children have many opportunities to explore different materials. For example, they explore the texture of flour as they pour it and watch it run through their fingers, making different patterns, or seeing what happens when they add food colouring and water to it. Children develop their hand-eye coordination skills as they play with dried cereal and spoons, often enjoying eating what they manage to get on the spoon.

Children's behaviour is very good as they are fully occupied, settled and happy. The childminder acts as an excellent role model and children show care and consideration for one another, for example, saying 'please' and 'thank you' as they pass things to each other and explaining the benefits of sharing and taking turns in their play. Clear procedures and guidance provided by the childminder ensure all steps are taken to minimise cross infection. The childminder provides a very good range of nutritious snacks for the children on a daily basis. Parents provide their children's packed lunches. Children are aware of keeping safe and this is managed sensitively through their activities and safety routines. For example, children willingly help to tidy up because they know that if they step on the bricks they will hurt their feet.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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