

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/04/2010
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
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 was registered in 2004. She lives with her husband in the Billingham area of Stockton-on-Tees. The home is close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The whole of the ground floor, first floor bathroom and one bedroom of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. She 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 weekdays from 7am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. She takes and collects children from the local nursery and schools.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a very welcoming, safe environment for all children, which supports their welfare and ensures they are happy and secure in her care. Observation and assessment procedures ensure that children's potential and individual needs are fulfilled. All children make good progress in their learning and development, having access to a wide range of toys and activities. The childminder forms positive relationships with parents, engaging them in daily discussion about their child and keeping them well-informed with a range of written policies and procedures. Links with other providers, where children receive care and education in more than one setting, are being developed. The childminder has a positive attitude to continuous improvement, by embracing training opportunities, and she is beginning to use self-evaluation and reflective practice systems, to continually improve her service to parents and the children in her care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the systems to involve parents and other early years providers in contributing to children's learning and development records
- develop the procedure for hand washing to enable each child to have access to individual towels.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit from the childminder's sound knowledge of safeguarding so that they are protected from harm. The childminder demonstrates a clear understanding of child protection issues and has completed updated training. She shares her duty of care with parents so that they are fully aware of her responsibilities in safeguarding children. Relevant checks are undertaken on adults in the household ensuring they are suitable to have contact with children. Thorough risk assessments, which are regularly updated ensure that hazards to children are kept to a minimum. Copies of all documents, for example, safeguarding, behaviour management, equal opportunities and complaints procedures, are made readily available to parents. The childminder's home is well organised to ensure children are cared for in a safe environment, both indoors and outside.

Children have access to a varied range of spontaneous and planned activities which promote play and learning opportunities, within the home and out in the community. The areas of the premises used for childcare play purposes are well-organised. There is a designated play room which provides children with easy access to a good range of toys, equipment and resources. This encourages them to choose independently, allowing each child to follow their interests, spark their curiosity and imagination. The childminder promotes equality and diversity by providing resources and activities that promote positive images regarding culture, gender and disability. She recognises that each child is unique and purposefully addresses children's individual needs to ensure no child is disadvantaged. She is beginning to use formal self-evaluation and reflective practice systems to identify strengths and drive improvement. She also involves parents and children in the self-evaluation process as they complete questionnaires. Parents speak very positively about the childminder and describe her as a 'first class childminder who has a great rapport with children' and 'an excellent childminder who is extremely flexible'. The childminder embraces additional training opportunities, consequently, this extends her skills and knowledge which has a positive impact on the care she offers.

The childminder establishes good relationships with parents and carers and is becoming aware of the importance of effectively liaising with others involved in the children's lives, such as, the local primary school and nursery. She establishes contractual agreements and gathers relevant information from parents about children's individual and additional needs at the time they place their child in her care. This forms the basis of an effective, two-way partnership. The childminder provides a caring and nurturing environment, keeping parents fully informed and talking to them each day about their children's experiences while at the setting. However, systems for parents and other providers to contribute to children's learning and development records are not fully effective.

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

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and implements it well. Her good understanding of children's individual personalities promotes, effective behaviour management. The childminder's confident approach to equal opportunities contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. Children are happy and secure as a result of the childminder's praise and support. They benefit from a flexible routine including a balance of child-centred and adult-led activities. The childminder plays and talks with children constantly, she listens closely to their ideas and encourages their suggestions for activities. She joins in well with their play and extends learning through good use of questioning and support of the children. For example, she encourages them to identify colours and count how many trees they are playing with. A very good range of resources is provided for the children and this is complemented with visits to toddler groups to provide children with lots of opportunities to socialise with their peers. The childminder is fully attentive to children's conversations, effectively promoting language and social skills. As a result, children are making good progress with their learning in all areas. The childminder plans activities around children's interests and capabilities and knows the children in her care very well. She has developed individual learning records for the children, which include detailed observations and clearly identify the next steps in children's development. This information is used effectively to inform her planning. In addition the childminder has developed clear 'tracker' systems, which clearly highlights children's achievements and progress made towards the early learning goals over time.

Planned trips to see animals, to the farm and on nature walks help children to begin to develop an interest in the natural world. Children explore topics relating to Spring and new life. They have fun and nurture their problem solving skills as they complete jigsaws and play with shape sorters. The childminder supports them to build towers, introducing language, such as, 'bigger' and 'smaller' as they play. Children explore many early mark making experiences as they draw pictures and use paint. They are beginning to explore early writing and reading. They identify their names as they self-register and show a keen interest in books. Children have good fun making their own books about the activities they have enjoyed which also contributes to raising their self-esteem and giving them a sense of belonging. Their creativity and imagination is nurtured as they use the role play resources, such as, the kitchen and play food. They love to dress up and explore with a range of media including 'junk modelling'. Children play with a variety of mobile phones, cameras and programmable toys and a computer. This helps children to begin to develop skills for the future.

The childminder helps the children to understand about keeping themselves safe when they are out and about, for example, they learn about safely crossing roads and regularly practice the emergency evacuation procedure. Children's health is promoted mostly effectively, through the childminder's routines and practices. However, procedures for hand-washing do not fully promote children's health, as all children share the same towel in the bathroom. Children are learning about

healthy lifestyles. Each day they have access to fresh air and exercise as they play in the garden, go to the park or nearby recreation areas. Good standards of hygiene are well-established within the house. Healthy eating is promoted wherever possible with nutritious snacks of fresh fruit being offered, and varied meals. Children build on their independence as they access fresh drinking water, which is made readily available in their own cups. The childminder gathers clear information from parents about children's dietary needs, including preferences and any allergies, so that they can eat safely. The childminder keeps with her, at all times, a suitably equipped first aid kit, plus a paediatric first aid qualification, this ensures that she can respond positively, should a child have an accident or become unwell while 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	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

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

Met