

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/04/2010
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 1992. She lives in the Nunthorpe area of Middlesbrough with her husband and adult son. The house is situated close to local amenities. The whole of the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The childminder cares for children on weekdays from 7.15am to 6pm for 37 weeks of the year.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years old at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years old. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder takes and collects children to and from the local school, nursery and playgroup.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very warmly welcomed into an extremely friendly and exceptionally child-oriented home by the childminder, who is committed to meeting their individual needs. This is supported by mostly effective partnerships with parents and other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Procedures and required documentation are in place and used effectively to ensure the safety and welfare of children. Children make good progress in their learning as they engage in a wide range of experiences both indoors and outside of the home. The childminder is developing systems for observations and tracking children's progress. She is developing suitable systems of self-evaluation to enable her to monitor her service and identify targets for future development, helping to ensure continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop existing systems for recording children's progress, including matching observations to the expectations of the areas of learning and identifying learning priorities
- involve parents as part of the ongoing observation and assessment process and encourage them to contribute to the learning and development records
- develop resources and activities for children to begin to know about their own and other people's cultures in order to understand and celebrate similarities and differences in a diverse society.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises her provision well. She has a clear understanding of child protection issues and of her responsibility to protect children's safety and welfare, which ensures children are well protected. In addition, the childminder ensures all adults who have contact with children are suitable and appropriately vetted. The childminder has a good understanding of the requirements and the information she needs to obtain from parents to ensure all records are well maintained. Effective records are maintained with regard to the children's attendance, medication and accidents. All records are stored to maintain confidentiality. Risks are minimised within the home, hazardous materials are out of children's reach, stair gates are used and the childminder provides close supervision to young children to ensure their safety. This is supported by a record of risk assessment for the home and garden. The childminder ensures that children are kept safe on outings as she implements effective procedures, such as having children secure in car seats and checking that equipment at parks is suitable for the age of the children. Children learn to keep themselves safe through the childminder's guidance, including road safety and possible dangers of talking to strangers.

Systems for self-evaluation are effective. The childminder is able to identify her strengths and weaknesses using the Ofsted self-evaluation form. She is passionate about the children in her care and is a very experienced childminder. She gains feedback from parents and other childminders. This gives her an optimal view of the service she provides. She has successfully addressed the recommendations from the last inspection. This improves outcomes for children's well-being and safety. Children's play opportunities are maximised through the effective organisation of space, time and resources. The environment is bright, stimulating and informative for children and their parents. This allows children to make choices about their learning and play. The childminder rotates resources frequently to ensure that children's interest in play is effectively stimulated. Children enjoy looking at photographs of activities they have taken part in, which gives them a real sense of belonging. Resources are colourful and interesting. The childminder promotes equality and diversity in a very natural way, which is meaningful to the children. However, there are limited resources available which reflect positive images of diversity, and opportunities to explore different cultures and religions are not effectively incorporated into activity planning.

Children's individual needs are known and met because the childminder has effective relationships with them and their parents. Parents comment very positively on the service provided, reporting that the children 'adore the childminder and thrive in the contented family atmosphere' and 'My appreciation towards the childminder is endless.' Parents are made very welcome and feel at ease to share any views or concerns with the childminder, safe in the knowledge that they will be listened to and treated with respect. Clear and inclusive procedures work well in practice and this information is shared with parents. These help to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting by clearly outlining the service she provides. Daily verbal feedback maintains a two-way flow

of information between parents and the childminder. Information regarding children's progress is discussed regularly; however, parents are not encouraged to contribute to children's learning and development records. The childminder is very aware of the value of working in partnership with other professionals to help support individual children. She talks to staff at other settings that children attend about the teaching methods they adopt and individual children's general welfare so that she can plan appropriate experiences to complement and enhance children's learning when they are in her care.

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

Children are relaxed and content in the childminder's care as they are treated with warmth and kindness. They are happy to go to her for comfort, reassurance and support, and display high levels of confidence and self-esteem. The childminder provides children with a very positive role model and she ensures that children's good behaviour and effort are readily acknowledged. Children are making good progress and the childminder demonstrates a sound working knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn and develop. She has many years experience of caring for children. Children play purposefully with a varied range of toys and activities that interest them and provide them with suitable challenges. Children's independence is developing as they select and play with resources, which are accessibly stored to promote free choice. Flexible daily routines allow children to experience a suitable range of activities in the home and within the local community, such as going to nursery, playgroups, museums and farms. This helps children to understand about their local community and gives them opportunities to socialise with their peer group. The childminder has introduced learning diaries for the children which include information about the activities they take part in and observations of their development. However, these are in their infancy and are not linked to the areas of learning and do not identify the next steps in children's development. Nevertheless, the childminder clearly knows the children very well and talks confidently about their individual progression. This is combined with flexible plans which cover the areas of learning well and are based on children's interests.

Children are very confident in the childminder's care and their communication skills are promoted effectively. They spontaneously sing nursery rhymes and the childminder chats constantly to them, talking about what they are doing and reinforcing colours and words. Children are very confident speakers and happily chat with adults, describing their morning at nursery and talking about their friends. They are very inquisitive and talk about the weather and why it gets dark and intently discuss recent news events, such as the volcanic ash. The childminder is beginning to introduce them to mathematical language; for example, she asks the children, 'It is too big or too small?' as they use construction toys. Children have good opportunities to be creative as they take part in a wide range of arts and crafts activities, such as painting, colouring and messy play. Nature walks provide children with opportunities to find sticks and feathers to make collage birds; this makes learning fun for children. Children love to explore and investigate in the garden as they make bird feeders and plant bulbs. They are currently

planting sunflower seeds in order to take part in a local competition, 'Northumbria in Bloom'. Children love to read and listen to stories, with pre-school children enjoying 'Horrid Henry'. Younger children enjoy simple picture books and the childminder encourages them to identify objects in the book and takes time to answer their many enquiring questions. The childminder also complements this with trips to the local library. Children are beginning to show a keen interest in linking sounds and letters and can recognise and sound all the letters in their name. This help them to develop skills for the future. Children explore early problem-solving skills as they experiment when taking part in baking activities and also complete jigsaws and play with various mathematical games. Children practise their mark-making skills as they write with crayons, paints and pencils.

Children's welfare is promoted well by the childminder. Children enjoy daily opportunities for physical exercise, including going for lots of walks and trips to the local park to feed the animals. Some meals are provided by parents; however, the childminder understands the importance of promoting children's awareness of healthy foods. She provides lots of fresh fruit and vegetables and talks to the children about healthy foods. The childminder acts as a positive role model, sitting with the children at lunch time to eat her own lunch. Children have good opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe. They practise regular fire drills and confidently talk about the road safety procedure. Gentle reminders from the childminder to tidy away toys so that children do not fall and hurt themselves reinforce children's understanding of keeping safe. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security and confidence in the setting. The childminder gives the children lots of praise and encourages them to share and to consider how others feel. Consequently, children have developed close and positive relationships with the childminder and are very secure 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

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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:

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- implement a written statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse or neglect (Arrangements for safeguarding children) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 02/06/2010
- implement a written statement of procedures to be followed in relation to complaints which relate to the requirements of the Childcare Register and which a parent makes in writing or by email (Procedures for dealing with complaints) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register). 02/06/2010

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the compulsory Childcare Register section of the report (Arrangements for safeguarding children) 02/06/2010
- take action as specified in the compulsory Childcare Register section of the report (Procedures for dealing with complaints). 02/06/2010