

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	16/06/2010
Inspector	Julie Morrison
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 1992. She lives with her husband and their four children aged 19, 17, 12 and four years in Chester-le-Street. The childminder has three assistants who sometimes work with her. The family has a pet hamster. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is a garden for outdoor play. The childminder cares for children on weekdays from 7.30am to 7pm for 48 weeks of the year.

When working alone, the childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. When working with an assistant she may care for a maximum of seven children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than four may be in the early years age range. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She currently has 19 children on roll, of whom eight are in the early years age range. The childminder collects children from the local school and nursery and attends toddler groups on a regular basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are very well cared for by the experienced and dedicated childminder. She demonstrates a genuine commitment to supporting the individual needs of all children in her care. Her home is totally dedicated to childcare, providing an inclusive and child-orientated environment where children have very good opportunities to progress in their learning and development. The childminder has extremely effective procedures in place to work closely with parents to support the children's care and development. She maintains a good liaison with the local nursery, ensuring continuity of learning. The childminder demonstrates a very positive attitude towards developing the service she provides. This ensures that outcomes for children are promoted well.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- build upon systems to gather children's starting points and to assess the progress children are making towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises her provision well. She demonstrates a good understanding of safeguarding children issues and is fully aware of and confident

about procedures to follow should she have any concerns. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which have been recently updated, are used effectively to underpin her good practice. Written risk assessments of all areas of the home and garden along with daily checks and appropriate safety equipment ensure that children are kept safe within the home environment. Children's safety is promoted well on outings as the childminder implements effective procedures, such as, carrying contact details for children and a first aid kit, along with constant supervision of the children. The childminder holds an up-to-date first aid certificate and has requested consent from parents to obtain emergency medical treatment. This ensures she could respond quickly and effectively to any accidents.

The childminder demonstrates a very positive attitude towards her career and developing her provision. She has made good use of the Ofsted self-evaluation form and has a very good understanding of areas she wishes to develop. This helps to promote outcomes for children and promotes an environment of continuous improvement. All recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been positively addressed. The childminder has an abundance of toys and activities for inside and outside play. She clearly considers how to make best use of space in order to achieve the maximum benefit for children, for example, creating zones to meet the needs of a wide age range of children. Toys are stored on low-level shelving or in boxes. This enables children to make confident choices about their learning and play. The children benefit from dedicated playrooms in the child-orientated home where colourful examples of their work, along with posters and photographs, help to promote their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

High emphasis is put on partnership with parents, which has a very positive impact on children's overall well-being. The childminder has implemented very effective procedures to gather feedback from parents and children about the service she provides, and this is used to continue to develop her practice. Parents speak very highly about the care and learning she provides, and children comment that they love all the fun activities they do and they 'love her lots'. The childminder collects and shares information about the children and values parents' contributions as partners in children's ongoing learning and development, for example, providing laminated song sheets and photographs to enable parents to continue building upon children's learning at home. Parents are kept well-informed about her setting as they receive copies of all policies and procedures and regular newsletters. The childminder ensures that parents are kept fully up-to-date about their child's learning through daily diaries for younger children, verbal feedback, access to their child's developmental file and text and photograph messages. Close liaison with staff at the local nursery serves to support and promote the continuity of care and learning for all children who attend more than one setting. The childminder demonstrates a very positive attitude towards supporting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She works closely with parents and other services to ensure that children's individual needs are met well.

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

The childminder has a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She plans a wide range of activities, which ensures that all areas of learning are covered very well. Plans take into account children's individual needs and interests. For example, after identifying that some children were afraid of bees she introduced treasure baskets with bee soft toys and photographs, and bee related songs and stories. This helps children to learn more about bees in a fun way and helps to remove some of their fear. Children are very settled and at ease in the childminder's care. They part happily from parents and make confident choices about their play. The childminder helps and supports children's learning well. For example, she sits on the floor with the children and engages in their play. She promotes language development well as she encourages them to talk. For example, as children point to a car like daddy's, she asks them to tell her what it looks like and what colour it is. All children have easy access to books and mark-making materials, which further supports their communication and literacy skills. Children have very good opportunities to learn about the world around them. They go a wide variety of trips, for example, to the museum and to the park, where they collect tadpoles. Laminated pictures of each stage of the tadpole cycle, along with relevant stories, further supports children's learning. The childminder makes very good use of everyday occurrences to promote learning. For example, they discuss the hot weather and she explains to them how to look for darker areas in the garden which mean they are shaded from the sun. This helps to promote children's awareness of keeping safe in the sun as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. A wide range of fun and interesting planned activities helps children to begin to learn about other cultures. For example, they visit a Chinese supermarket to select new foods to try, and watch the celebrations for the Chinese New Year. Outside, a sand pit and water feature, which includes drain pipes, funnels and buckets, encourages children to have fun while developing their problem-solving skills. These are further promoted by a wealth of building blocks, games and jigsaws. Children are beginning to develop their skills for the future as they use the computer to search for information and print pictures. The childminder has introduced individual files for the children, these include examples of the children's work, photographs and observations of their learning which are clearly linked to the areas of learning and identify children's next steps in learning. The childminder obtains information about children's starting points through discussion with parents and observation of the children. However, at present she has not further developed her systems to effectively show the progress the children are making towards the early learning goals. That being said, the impact of this on children's learning and development is minimal as she clearly knows the children very well. As a result, children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

Children's welfare is promoted very well by the childminder. Their knowledge about personal safety is encouraged by well-planned activities, such as road safety sessions in the garden, and clear boundaries set by the childminder. For example, even young children understand that they must close the zip on the safety net on the trampoline before they can bounce. This positively contributes to children

developing a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe. Children's good health is given high priority and children have excellent opportunities to be active. They benefit from free access to the very well-resourced and thought-out garden area. For example, a separate enclosed pitch area allows older children to safely play ball games, and toddlers continue to gain control over their bodies as they try to run and kick balls. Their physical development is further promoted as they climb up to the playhouse, bounce on the trampoline and play on the swings. Children's well-being is enriched through accessing a healthy diet. A varied menu, which children are actively encouraged to help to plan, encourages children to have a good awareness of nutritious meal options. This is further supported by children growing their own peas and strawberries. Children benefit from positive relationships with the childminder, who is caring, warm and friendly. This helps them to feel safe and secure in her care. She uses a very positive and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour, which takes into account their ages and understandings. She recognises that one of her main strengths is providing a child-centred environment where children all of ages play well together, make confident choices and learn respect for one another. As a result, children behave very well. Older children cuddle toddlers, telling them 'well done' when they put toys away, and toddlers clap happily, very pleased and proud of their achievements. Children are very settled, happy and confident in the childminder's 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	2
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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