

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	25/11/2010
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
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 first registered in 2010. She lives on the outskirts of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire with her partner and four children aged 15, nine and three years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder works in partnership with another childminder. When working alone she is able to care for up to five children under eight years. When working together they can jointly care for up to eight children under eight years. There are currently three children in the early years age group on roll. The childminder also provides care for children in the older age group.

The ground floor of the home is used for childminding and there is an enclosed back garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Close partnerships with parents and well-maintained records enable children's individual needs to be met. The childminder enjoys warm and affectionate relationships with the children, who happily ask for a cuddle and clearly feel secure and valued. A wide range of interesting activities, both in the home and on outings ensure children make good progress in their learning and development. The childminder is committed to further professional development and has effective systems in place to evaluate the quality of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhance children's safety by reviewing the risk assessments before embarking on each different outing
- improve further the observations and assessments to include links to the areas of learning so children's progress can be more securely matched to the expectations of the early learning goals

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has clear procedures in place that ensure children are effectively safeguarded. She has a clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and keeps contact details for child protection agencies. The home is secure and the childminder keeps a log of visitors to her home. She and her co-

childminder deploy themselves effectively so children are supervised and kept safe. Rigorous risk assessments for the home are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed ensuring children play safely. Although the childminder has informal risk assessments in place to keep children safe on outings, these are not always reviewed before embarking on different outings, which potentially means not all hazards are minimised. However, through discussion the childminder shows she is fully aware of the risks and takes steps to ensure destinations, such as, zoos, farms and parks are safe. All essential documentation is in place to promote the welfare of children, such as, emergency contact information and accident records

The childminder offers a welcoming and homely environment for children. Resources are well organised so children can make effective choices about their play and learning. As a result children enjoy a wide range of age-appropriate activities and make good progress in their learning and development. Methods for observing, assessing and planning for children's learning are evolving but do not yet show the links to the areas of learning. This limits the childminder's ability to ensure children continue to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The childminder enjoys good relationships with parents and gathers comprehensive information from them so that she understands about children's individual needs. Written policies and procedures are shared with parents so that they know about the childminding provision. Settling-in procedures are flexible and responsive to children's individual personalities so that they can be secure and content in the childminder's care. The childminder is aware of the importance of partnerships with other adults involved in the care of the children and is beginning to build links with other providers, such as, the local primary school.

The childminder is developing a written self-evaluation designed to help her develop the provision and reflect on the many strengths of the setting. She is proactive in seeking out further training opportunities to increase her knowledge and understanding, which ensures she can continue to improve the outcomes for children. She and her partner form a strong team and use their complementary skills and attributes. This increases their ability to sustain the quality of the provision.

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

Children are clearly relaxed and comfortable in the childminder's care. They go to her for cuddles and involve her in their play. They arrive at the setting cheerful and confident and soon settle to their activities. The childminder has good systems in place to observe what children can do in order to plan for their future learning. Assessment records show a clear picture of the activities children enjoy and confirm that they make good progress in their development, but as yet, there are few links with the areas of learning.

Children freely access books and puzzles and have good opportunities to develop their language. The childminder talks to them, listens to their chatter and shows

she values their ideas. Activities are designed to promote children's pre-writing skills, such as, mark making with paint or using play dough. Children play imaginatively, for example, they use play food and kitchen equipment to make chicken and chips for lunch. Outings into the local community and further afield help children develop relationships and learn about their own community. They attend local groups for music or messy play and frequently enjoy trips to zoos or farms. Practical activities, such as, cooking, help children understand about numbers, weights and sequencing, ensuring they develop skills for the future.

Children gain awareness of their own cultures and those of others through books, small world figures and planned activities. The childminder supports children who have English as an additional language. She collects key words and phrases from parents and ensures children have opportunities to find out about their own culture, for example, making Christmas decorations or listening to familiar music. Although she is not currently caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the childminder shows she understands the importance of working with parents and others in order to offer appropriate support.

The childminder helps children learn to keep themselves safe, for instance, they all help to tidy away their toys to avoid tripping over. Food is healthy and nutritious and takes into account any preferences or special dietary needs. The childminder helps children develop an interest in their diet as they help shop for healthy foods and take an active part in food preparation. Children enjoy daily opportunities for physical exercise in nearby parks or in the garden and they benefit from lots of fresh air on their walks in the countryside.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	3
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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