

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	257452
Inspection date	24/01/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 1995. She lives with her husband who is also registered as her assistant in Spalding, Lincolnshire. The whole of the childminder's house is registered for use although childminding predominantly takes place on the ground floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, pre-schools, the library, local toddler and childminding groups, shops and parks. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of six 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 this number increases to seven children under eight years of whom no more than four may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding four children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Children's Learning, Care and Development and is a member of the National Childminding Association. She is currently working towards a Bachelor of Honours Degree in Childhood and Youth Studies.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The professional commitment and dedication demonstrated by this childminder enables her to offer an excellent standard of care and education to the children. Children clearly thrive and make rapid progress in this very well-equipped and organised setting that truly recognises their uniqueness and individuality. The childminder meets the diverse needs of children and ensures that all children are able to participate in all activities in a fully inclusive way. Information from parents and from the childminder's assessments is used in a highly competent manner to inform activity planning and ensure that children are offered appropriate support. The childminder demonstrates an utmost commitment to continually monitoring, evaluating and further improving her practice and has very effective systems in place to ensure she is able to do this.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing further information

about children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has an excellent understanding of her role in safeguarding children and is well informed about the procedures to put into practice when necessary. This knowledge has been gained as over time she has regularly attended both basic and advanced child protection training to ensure her knowledge is up to date which means children are extremely well protected. The childminder is exceptionally well organised, documentation and record keeping is exemplary which promotes the safety and welfare of the children and underpins the high quality care offered. Risk assessments are thorough for the premises, outdoor area and all types of outings undertaken. The childminder demonstrates a very secure understanding of how to minimise potential risks to children. As a result, children are kept extremely safe at all times.

The childminder ensures the children's play space is inviting and well organised so they can move around freely and safely and make independent choices from the wide range of accessible resources placed in different areas on the ground floor. To enhance this aspect, the childminder has developed a book of photographs showing additional resources that are stored. This gives all children a voice and enables them to make choices about what they want to play with. Many displays and stimulating posters further enhance the learning environment. Children feel a strong sense of belonging. For example, their work is displayed and they have their own personal boxes and pegs for their belongings. The recently developed undercover outdoor area gives children excellent opportunities to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor environments all year round. The childminder is highly committed to inclusive practice and ensures that all children's individual needs are well met.

The childminder values the importance of working with parents and as such, has built up excellent partnerships with them. For example, she provides a bi-annual written progress report of children's progress and asks parents to contribute what they know about their children so that she can compile individual learning action plans to address their next steps. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about the setting in a portfolio, through a wide range of written policies and procedures and further information of interest displayed by the entrance. The childminder effectively gathers excellent information about children's individual and changing needs. This enables her to take each child's uniqueness into account when planning activities and providing care. Good partnerships have been established with other local providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in the childminder's care. Clear information is shared relating to children's welfare and some aspects of their development. However, the childminder might consider how to develop these partnerships in relation to sharing more specific information about children's learning and development and how this can be consistently supported across the settings.

The childminder has a clear and realistic self-evaluation process to identify areas

for future development. She constantly reflects and evaluates her practice and provision to ensure that children have excellent experiences and she continually looks for ways to improve her service for all users. She demonstrates total commitment to furthering her own professional development by attending a wealth of training initiatives. Since the last inspection, there have been significant developments that have further enhanced the provision such as extending the range of outdoor play equipment which was a suggestion made by the children and the construction of the undercover outdoor play area which supports outdoor learning all year round.

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

Children experience an extensive range of play and learning opportunities which enable them to make rapid progress in all areas of learning. This is further extended by the attendance at many local groups and through visits out into the local community and places of interest. The childminder is very knowledgeable about how children learn through play and takes their lead as she supports them effectively. She is able to adapt activities to meet the needs of children of different ages and abilities. For example, as children enjoy throwing bean bags into coloured baskets the childminder encourages younger children to stand closer and to begin to count the bean bags in the baskets. For older, more able children, she gets them to take steps backwards so as to challenge them and then asks them to select a coloured basket before they throw the bean bag to further promote their coordination skills. Simple counting, shape and colour recognition is very effectively filtered into everyday activities and play.

Comprehensive and effective observation and assessment records provide a very accurate account of children's development. Observations are clearly linked to the early learning goals and meaningful next steps of learning are identified which aids the childminder in planning for individual children's learning. The childminder also uses her exceptional knowledge of each child's current interests to provide their favourite activities which she can then use to work on their next steps of learning. Parent's contributions are used very effectively to further promote children's learning. The childminder has very clear systems in place to monitor children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Children enjoy very warm relationships with the childminder as she has cared for them for long periods of time. They are very settled and confident in her home. They behave well and are learning to take turns and share, for example, popular resources. Their independence is thriving, for example, as they wash their own hands, choose toys they would like to play with and select their own snack. Children have many opportunities to mark-make and develop their pre-writing skills. They are fully encouraged to develop a love of books. For example, they share story sacks with props. The childminder further extends this love of books by displaying pictures from favourite stories around the room, encouraging children to recall the story and remember favourite aspects. Children's communication and

language skills are developing very well as the childminder provides much support to younger children who are in the early stages of learning to speak. She repeats key words clearly and extends the single words that they say, adding one or two other key words to promote the use of extended sentences. Children enjoy problem solving, for example, as they try to fit shoes on the correct feet or work out how to use the very wide range of electronic toys. They enjoy learning about nature as they look at caterpillars in the garden, feed the birds and pick up leaves whilst looking for bugs. Children learn to grow and take care of living things such as tomatoes and sunflowers. They learn about their local community by making scrapbooks of local events and happenings and get involved in local festivals and fairs. Children learn about recycling and taking care of their environment. They also learn about the wider world as they celebrate multicultural festivals and respond to appeals for children in other countries less fortunate than themselves. All of these activities begin to lay very secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children have excellent opportunities to express their creativity through a huge range of art and craft activities, role and imaginative play and music. Children spend quality time in the fresh air on a daily basis. They enjoy the excellent range of outdoor play equipment at the childminders house as well as regular trips out to places of interest and the local community. This includes specific sessions at groups to promote their physical development such as yoga, dancing and exercise. They are fully encouraged to embrace a healthy lifestyle through activities such as making fruit kebabs and healthy pizzas.

Children's welfare is promoted extremely well. All documentation which safeguards children's health is maintained to a high standard. The childminder has maintained a valid first aid qualification which ensures that she is able to effectively deal with minor injuries. Systems to reduce the risk of cross contamination are highly effective. For example, children use individual towels and flannels for washing and drying their hands and faces. Nappy changing procedures have been well considered with regards to maintaining good levels of hygiene. Children learn from a young age about following good hygiene routines. For example, they brush their teeth after meals and understand that their used towels go back in their personal baskets to prevent other children using them. Snacks provided by the childminder are very nutritious, healthy and balanced. Parents provide lunches for their children. The childminder shares her healthy eating policy with parents so that they are fully aware of her commitment towards promoting healthy eating. Children have high levels of confidence and self-esteem as the childminder frequently praises them for their efforts. Children learn about their own and others safety through a vast range of activities such as role play and regular visits to people who help them in the community, as well as by taking part in regular evacuation drills.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	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	1
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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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