

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	09/02/2011
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 2007. She lives with her husband and two children aged four and six years in a township just outside of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The provision is set over three floors with bathroom facilities on each floor. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding apart from the main bedroom on the second floor and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, the library, shops and parks. The family have 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 four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding five children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and has completed the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework. The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and is currently in receipt of nursery education funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder provides a very high quality provision for children; they enjoy a very broad range of activities and learning experiences which help them to make excellent progress in their learning and development. The childminder is exceptional at promoting inclusive practice, she truly recognises and values the uniqueness of each child and ensures their individual needs are met through highly effective communication with parents. She constantly considers how to make best use of the space and resources available to her to ensure the best possible outcomes for children. The childminder demonstrates the 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:

- making further use of information about children's starting points as evidence of the excellent progress they are making in their learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates a secure and in-depth knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures and a very high level of commitment towards promoting children's safety. Exceptionally well-organised policies, procedures and records completely underpin children's safety and well-being. Robust risk assessments are in place for the premises, outdoor area and all types of outing undertaken with the children. The childminder constantly reappraises the environment as well as the procedures for outings. As a result, all potential hazards are minimised and children's safety is secured. Risk assessment documents also show how she educates the children to begin to take responsibility for their own and other's safety. A wealth of ongoing activities and reminders about safety issues help children build up their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, very young children learn to take supervised risks such as climbing or coming down the stairs safely or using larger, challenging play equipment in the park.

The childminder demonstrates an infectious enthusiasm and obvious passion for her work and is highly motivated to continue to make changes that drive improvement and further improve the outcomes for children. Consequently, the childminder has learnt the benefits of self-evaluation and reflective practice and this secures her outstanding capacity to improve. The childminder values the benefits of continuing professional development and attends a wealth of training courses to extend her skills and support further improvement in her practice.

The childminder demonstrates an absolute commitment towards promoting equal opportunities for all children in her care as well as towards narrowing gaps in achievement to ensure that all children fulfil their potential. For example, she is taking part in the 'Every Child A Talker' initiative which has helped her to monitor in particular, children's speech and language development and to ensure that her home is communication friendly for children with words, photographs and pictures displayed throughout the ground floor. As a result, children who speak English as an additional language are particularly well supported. The childminder's clear knowledge and understanding of each child and their family is exemplary and she is extremely sensitive and supportive of different family circumstances. The childminder constantly considers how to make best use of the space, facilities and resources accessible to her to ensure that children receive maximum benefit. For example, she borrows extra resources, seeks funding for further equipment such as mark making tools, a playhouse and water tray and rotates her wide range of excellent condition toys and resources so that children continuously have new play opportunities. The childminder fully understands the importance of outdoor learning opportunities in all weathers. She ensures that children visit many places of interest, local community groups and facilities as well as making full use of local areas of open land to enjoy nature and wildlife. Free flow play between indoors and outdoors is enabled and encouraged.

The childminder has established excellent systems for sharing information with other providers also caring for children in her care. This ensures a consistent

learning and care experience for children when they attend more than one setting. Partnerships with parents are outstanding. A wealth of information is given to parents so that they are clear about the service offered. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about up and coming activities and reminders, on an on-going basis. Daily diary sheets and frequent discussions keep parents informed about their child's day and their particular achievements. The childminder values what parents know about what their children can do and uses this information to inform her assessment and planning. This helps the childminder gain a complete picture of the child. Discussions when children start in her care ensure that the childminder is able to fully plan activities to meet children's individual needs and interests straight away. She might consider how to make further use of information about children's starting points given by parents, as evidence of the excellent progress they are making towards the Early Learning Goals. Parents' and children's views are important to the childminder and she regularly seeks their feedback to help inform her systems of self-evaluation. Letters seen at the inspection from parents contain extremely positive comments about the 'outstanding care' and 'safe and stimulating environment' for children. Children also comment about how much they enjoy going to the childminder's.

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

The childminder truly recognises and embraces the individuality of all the children she cares for and, as a result, extremely warm relationships have been formed. This helps children to feel very secure and settled. Children are provided with a huge range of activities and learning experiences which enable them to make excellent progress in all areas of their learning. The childminder is highly knowledgeable about how children learn and uses these skills as she supports child-initiated activities and delivers adult-led activities. She takes their lead and makes very effective use of spontaneous learning opportunities. For example, during an exploratory activity involving rice, she introduces size and number language talking about the different sized measuring cups and the number of cups of rice that children have. She further extends the children's interest by introducing the digital weighing scales to weigh the rice and watch the numbers on the display rise as they add more rice.

Exemplary observation, assessment and planning systems have been implemented. They are highly effective and provide a very informative account of the journey children are making in their learning. Observations are clearly linked to the early learning goals with meaningful next steps identified which enable the childminder to comprehensively plan for each child's individual learning. This ensures that all children get the most out of their learning, fulfil their potential and make rapid progress towards the early learning goals.

Children's independence is highly regarded and promoted. They are constantly asked to make choices and decisions for themselves about activities they wish to do and time is given for their self-care skills to develop. Children behave very well. They have complete regard for each other and respond very positively towards the childminder's enthusiastic interaction and considered approach. They have many

opportunities to make marks. For example, young children explore the new range of mark making implements, watching as the childminder demonstrates and then making patterns and marks themselves in the play dough. Children have access to an extensive range of books which helps them develop an early enjoyment of reading. This is further supported by frequent trips to the library and mobile library. Children benefit from a word and picture rich environment. They enjoy looking at photographs of recent activities such as the Chinese New Year dragon dancing and music at a local restaurant and other posters and displays help to stimulate discussion; for example, about the weather. Early numeracy is promoted effectively through number posters and games as well as many spontaneous opportunities such as counting the number of pegs needed to hang out the washing. Children are very much given time to solve simple problems themselves such as how to do jigsaws, how to take their own shoes off or how to work pieces of equipment. Children enjoy growing seeds and crops at the allotment which also encourages them to begin to understand about where food comes from. They use a wide range of toys and equipment which enable them to learn early information technology skills. Regular attendance at local groups enables children frequent opportunities to socialise with others and further extends the range of activities accessible to them. Children are encouraged to develop an appreciation of people's differences and similarities as well as an awareness of different cultures and traditions. They celebrate festivals important to them and have access to a wide range of resources and images reflecting diversity. Sensitive discussions with children ensure that all are learning an appreciation of the diverse society in which they live. All of these activities lay very secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children have excellent opportunities to express their creativity through a wide range of art and craft activities, role and imaginative play and music. Children spend quality time in the fresh air on a regular basis. Great emphasis is given to even the youngest children being able to walk at every opportunity to ensure that they get plenty of exercise and to aid their physical development. Frequent trips to local and further afield places of interest and the regular use of challenging play equipment in the local parks allow children great opportunities to be physically active and to develop a knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They are fully encouraged to embrace a healthy lifestyle through growing their own foods and talking about healthy and not so healthy foods. They learn about the effect that exercise has on their body and about particular aspects of health such as the care of their teeth.

Children's welfare is extremely well promoted. All documentation which safeguards children's health is maintained to a high standard. The childminder has refreshed her first aid qualification which keeps her knowledge very up-to-date and ensures that she is always able to effectively deal with minor injuries. Contents of the first aid box are regularly checked to ensure that they remain appropriate in quantity and condition to support the treatment of any injuries children may sustain. Children are taught the importance of maintaining their own health and hygiene from a young age. For example, they are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after having their nappy changed. They are taught about how germs spread. For example, they are reminded to cover their mouths whilst coughing. The childminder is a good role model with regard to good hygiene routines as she,

for example, washes her hands after helping children to blow their nose and ensures that food preparation areas are clean before use. All meals and snacks provided by the childminder are healthy, balanced and nutritious which promotes children's good health. Drinks are freely accessible to children at all times, enabling them to help themselves to a drink when they feel thirsty. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement as well as excellent levels of the childminder's attention and interaction. This helps them to build up a very high level of confidence and self-esteem. Reward stickers further reinforce positive behaviour and enable children to share their special achievements with their parents.

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	1
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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