

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY244819
Inspection date	10/03/2011
Inspector	Julie Neal
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 2002. She lives with her husband and two children on a working farm in the village of Middle Chinnock, located between Yeovil and Crewkerne, Somerset. Children are cared for in a building separate to the main house which has been specifically converted for childcare purposes. There are extensive outdoor areas suitable for children's use.

The childminder works with another registered childminder. When working alone she may care for a maximum of four children under eight years of age, three of which may be in the early years age range. When working with a co-childminder, they may provide to care for a maximum of nine children at any one time, five of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding eight children in the early years age group. The childminder also cares for children aged over five years to 11 years of age. This provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is not registered to provide overnight care. The childminder holds level three qualifications in early years care and education, and in playwork.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder meets children's needs very well overall. Children enjoy an inclusive environment where strong relationships with parents and others involved in supporting their individual needs enables the childminder to be consistently well-informed about each child's requirements. As a result children make extremely good progress towards the early learning and development goals relative to their starting points. The childminder's self-evaluations are effective in enabling her to prioritise areas for development that promote high quality outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of fire drills to ensure children have sufficient opportunities to practice these in order to learn how to conduct themselves safely should they need to evacuate the premises
- Review arrangements for monitoring the progress towards the early learning goals of children who attend other settings who are the main providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in order to demonstrate how their learning and development is supported

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is demonstrated in the effectiveness with which children are safeguarded. The childminder has undertaken safeguarding training and as a result has a thorough understanding of her responsibility to protect children from harm. She has written safeguarding policies and procedures which are given to parents to ensure that they are aware of her systems to safeguard children. Overall, these are clear and give appropriate information. However, the policy relating to safeguarding allegations being made against the childminder or others in the setting lacks detail, and so does not fully inform parents of the action the childminder would take in these circumstances. The childminder ensures that children are kept safe and secure, and conducts very good risk assessments. The childminder makes extremely good use of the outdoor learning environment, and the thoroughness of her risk assessments and daily health and safety routines ensure that children remain safe. For example, children benefit from the learning opportunities provided through the setting being situated on a working farm, and they immensely enjoy using the exciting adventure playground.

The childminder evaluates her practice well. She and her co-childminder regularly review what they do in order to develop action plans that will sustain good quality outcomes for children. Roles and responsibilities are shared very well, with both childminder's acting as key workers to individual children. Feedback from parents is welcomed and taken account of as part of the self-evaluation process, and children's views are included very well in action plans. For example, the childminder has included children's suggestions in plans for developing an outdoor area, such as turning an old trough into a water garden to keep tadpoles. The childminder has reviewed and updated all documentation to ensure that agreements with parents and other records relating to children reflect the co-childminding arrangements. Records clearly show when each childminder is present and confirm ratios are met.

The childminder develops strong relationships with parents and carers, and shares information well in order to ensure that children's individual needs are met. For example, where children have specific learning or development requirements, the childminder supports these very effectively through working closely with parents and with other professionals who may be involved. Home contact books are completed each day to ensure that parents are well-informed about the activities their children have enjoyed and any key achievements. Some children attend other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as preschool; some have started school but are still in the early years age range. The childminder develops good links with these providers in order to share information relating to individual learning and development.

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

Children's welfare, learning and development is promoted most effectively overall. The childminder's good health and safety procedures ensure that children enjoy a safe and hygienic environment. Children are protected from the risk of illness and cross infection because the childminder ensures parents are informed of her procedures relating to unwell children. The childminder is experienced in supporting children who have specific health conditions and works well with parents and other relevant professionals to ensure that she has any appropriate training to meet their needs. Meals and snacks provided by the childminder are healthy and nutritious and take account of children's individual dietary needs. Children enjoy very good outdoor activities that enable them to gain the health benefits of plenty of fresh air and exercise. For example, they immensely enjoy using climbing equipment, rope swings, and the trampoline in the adventure play area, stretching their muscles and learning physical co-ordination. Excellent opportunities to explore the farm and surrounding countryside provide children with daily exercise while they learn about the natural world. Children safely engage in these adventurous activities because, overall, the childminder teaches them very well about how to conduct themselves in order to minimise the risk of harm. Children are safe and secure when indoors, and the childminder has appropriate procedures in place to protect children in the event of a fire or similar emergency. These are practiced with children every term. However, some children do not take part in a fire drill each term, for instance, if they are absent on the day it is scheduled and so do not have the same opportunities to learn how to keep safe as their friends.

Children's learning and development is promoted extremely well. As a result, they make excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. The childminder and her co-childminder use their observations and their knowledge of children's individual interests very well to plan activities that support learning in all areas. For example, children who have recently developed independence in managing their personal needs show an interest in toilets. The childminder provides them with resources such as bathroom catalogues to look at different toilets and to use in cutting and sticking activities, they learn about where the water goes when they flush the toilet, and they use building bricks to construct a 'giants loo'. The effective key working system implemented by the two co-childminder's results in very good observations being made to identify each child's progress in learning. Children's development records are, overall, very good. Children's current stages of development are identified and individualised learning plans show key aims and objectives for each child. However, records for children who attend school, who are still in the early years age range, are less well maintained than those for children in the preschool age group. For example, they do not consistently identify how activities enjoyed with the childminder continue to support their learning.

Children are immensely enthusiastic and eager participants in activities. They benefit from the childminder's extremely good understanding of how children learn through play, and her excellent use of discussion to extend learning and develop

communication skills. For example, children choose to do a puzzle showing Goldilocks and the three Bears. The childminder talks to them about the story, and children enjoy retelling it as they sort out the puzzle pieces. Children use their mathematical problem-solving skills as they identify the pieces with straight sides and corners, and look at the colour and shape to decide where each piece should fit. They talk about the different animals in the picture, for example, that the rabbits are not the same colour as those they see in the local countryside. Children are extremely confident and happy in the setting. They are well behaved and demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and emotional security. For example, babies enjoy plenty of cuddles, they are extremely content because the childminder understands their individual needs and responds very well to these. Older children show care and concern for their younger friends, for example, they are very gentle as they show babies their favourite toys and encourage them to interact.

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	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	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	1
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	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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