

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY341055
Inspection date	24/03/2011
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
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 2006. She lives with her husband and four children aged 13, 11, seven and three years old in the Norton area of Stockton on Tees. The whole of the ground floor and most of the first floor is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder cares for children on weekdays from 7.30am to 6.15pm for 48 weeks of the year. The family has pet cats and guinea pigs.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than two may be in the early years range. She currently has two children on roll in the early years range. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years and has four children on roll. Children are cared for on part time basis. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a very warm and inclusive environment where children feel a strong sense of belonging. Their needs are met as the childminder establishes mainly very good relationships with parents and others, and shares relevant information. Policies, procedures and required documentation are all in place and used effectively to ensure the safety and welfare of children. Children make good progress in their learning as they engage in a wide range of experiences both indoors and outside of the home and the childminder is establishing mainly good systems for observations and tracking children's progress. She has established an effective system of self-evaluation to enable her to monitor her service and identify clear targets for future development, helping to ensure continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop the systems in place to track children's progress over time, including clear details of children's starting points
- further develop procedures to regularly share children's learning and development records and any other relevant information with other practitioners of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- build on the systems for parents to review their children's progress and contribute to their learning and development record develop
- further develop the systems in place to track children's progress over time, including clear details of children's starting points

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. They are fully safeguarded because the childminder has a secure understanding of child protection procedures. She is knowledgeable about the possible signs of abuse and has a clear understanding of what to do in the event of a concern. There is a safeguarding policy in place that is shared with parents. This means that they are made aware of the childminder's role and responsibilities in protecting children from harm. Children's welfare is further assured as the childminder and other household members have had all suitable checks completed. The childminder is well organised and all documentation required to promote the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place. For example, the childminder holds a current first aid certificate and has consent to obtain emergency medical treatment in place. This ensures she is able to respond to accidents appropriately. She has taken positive steps to minimise potential hazards and keep children safe. For example, comprehensive risk assessments of the premises and for all outings are carried out regularly and the childminder ensures children are appropriately supervised at all times.

The childminder evidences a strong commitment to her childminding provision. Systems for self-evaluation are effective with the childminder being able to identify her strengths and weaknesses well. She is passionate about the children in her care and gains feedback from parents, her local authority, and other childminders to give her an optimal view of the service she provides. The childminder is committed to improving her childcare practice by attending regular training. She has successfully completed the recommendations from the last inspection, for example, all records are accurately maintained. This improves outcomes for children's well-being and safety and the overall organisation within the setting. The childminder demonstrates a genuine commitment to inclusion. She promotes equality and diversity in a very naturalistic way which is meaningful to the children. The children express themselves freely, secure in the knowledge they will receive a consistent, warm response. The childminder knows the children well and uses good techniques to help build their confidence and self-esteem. A welcoming environment is created, children are able to play, rest and eat in comfortable surroundings. All children are encouraged to try out the full range of available activities and play equipment. The childminder has written policies and procedures in place relating to equality and diversity and caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and has attended several training courses related to extend her understanding. The indoor and outdoor environments are well resourced. All children have easy access to a range of good quality toys and resources. This encourages them to make choices and contributes to helping them make progress in their learning.

Children settle with ease and feel very secure because the childminder dedicates time to get to know them and their parents. Introductory visits are organised at the child's pace to help them settle into their new environment and gain a sense of belonging. Parents receive copies of all relevant information about the childminding

service, including all policies and procedures which inform the childminder's practice. Children benefit enormously from the warm and friendly relationships that are established between the parents and the childminder. The daily exchange of information, both verbally and written ensures that children's ever changing needs are consistently supported. Parents are kept up-to-date with their child's progress verbally. However, although parent's can access children's developmental records, they are not as yet, actively encouraged to contribute to the individual 'Learning Journeys' which record children's progress. Parents comment positively on the service they receive. They are impressed with 'the warm, friendly, well organised safe environment' and further report 'the standard of care provided is good'. The childminder is aware of the importance of building links with others who may be involved with each child, such as schools and nurseries. She receives regular newsletters and copies of activity planning. However, she has not yet fully developed systems to ensure the best continuity of care and learning by sharing learning and development records.

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

Children are well cared for and have lots of fun with the childminder. They interact confidently with the childminder and make independent choices about what they want to do. They have formed very warm relationships with each other, and openly display physical affection towards each other as they snuggle together and have lots of fun using the props from the 'magic sack'. They thoroughly enjoy acting out various children's character books, and share much laughter as they actively take part in the story telling. The childminder interacts very well with the children in their freely chosen play and she is warm and caring towards them. Flexible plans are in place to ensure that children receive a balance of adult and child-led activities delivered through indoor and outdoor play. These are complemented with visits to the library, community groups and parks to provide children with regular opportunities for physical exercise and to socialise with their peers. To cater for the needs of individuals, the planning of activities contains detailed information on the six areas of learning and development. Detailed observation and assessment records of children clearly identify their next steps in development, and this information is used to inform planning for individual children. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder is beginning to develop systems to track children's development over time; however, this is not fully embedded and does not include detailed information children's starting points. Children confidently make decisions in choosing resources and develop a sense of responsibility by packing the resources away when they have finished playing with them. The children are well-behaved as the childminder uses a positive and consistent approach to managing behaviour, which takes into account children's levels of understanding. The main focus currently is sharing and being kind to each other. The childminder is skilled at challenging and extending children's learning by questioning them appropriately, for example, when she talks about the size of the bubbles and why they need to wear gloves when planting the seeds into the compost pots.

Routine activities, such as reading stories and making marks, enhance children's

communication skills. Children are beginning to develop a sensitive awareness of diversity and an understanding of the needs of others. This is achieved through a wide range of activities and resources which promote a positive outlook of the wider world and help children learn about and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children celebrate various religious festivals, including Diwali and Chinese New Year which includes different food tasting sessions as part of the celebration. Children's thinking and early language skills are extended very well through effective discussions with the childminder, resulting in competent listeners. There is a wide range of books available which are clearly enjoyed by the children, both independently and with the childminder. This is complemented with trips to the local library. Children use information and communication technology to support their learning, for example, when using toy telephones, a computer, and 'cause and effect' toys. Children use counting and numbers well in everyday play situations and explore shape through fun activities. They explore simple capacity concepts using containers and funnels in the water tray and use mathematical language as they fill and empty buckets in the sand. Children enjoy exploring and investigating in the garden as they observe thunder flies and mini beasts. They plant and nurture strawberries and herbs and watch them grow. Children develop their creativity as they experiment with paint, dough and large pavement chinks, which also promotes their early mark making skills. They use their imagination as they play with small world toys and make musical instruments using pots, pans and sticks.

The childminder's home plays a key role in supporting children's learning and development. It is a place where children show they feel safe, cared for and relaxed because they are in the continuous care of a trusted and supportive adult. Activity planning also teaches children about keeping themselves safe within the setting, exploring emergency procedures, road safety and topics such as 'people who help us' and children also regularly practice the emergency evacuation procedure. Children know the childminder is always close at hand to support both their physical and emotional safety. They flourish as they access good opportunities for physical play. They love playing in the large, well equipped garden, going to the park and lots of walks within the local community. They also have fun dancing to their favourite music. This ensures they get plenty of fresh air and exercise. Children are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene and are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. The childminder promotes healthy eating through the provision of healthy, balanced home-cooked meals and a wide selection of fresh fruits at snack times. Meals take account of specific dietary requirements and drinking water is available and accessible throughout the session.

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	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	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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