

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	313761
Inspection date	31/03/2011
Inspector	Jacqui West

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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and 18 years old in the residential area of Anfield Plain in Stanley. The whole of the ground floor and the bathroom on the first floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed yard for outside play. She has two rabbits as pets. The childminder cares for children each weekday from 6.30am to 6pm for 48 weeks of the year.

The childminder 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. She is currently caring for five children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years and is currently caring for one child in this age group. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder collects children from the local school and attends several toddler groups on a regular basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children feel very secure as the childminder provides an exceptionally warm and welcoming environment for all children and their families. She demonstrates a positive attitude towards providing an inclusive environment. Children benefit from an exciting range of activities. As a result, they are making good progress in their learning and development. The resources are generally well-organised. Partnerships with parents and others are outstanding. Systems to reflect on the service provided are good, which results in continuous improvement being effectively maintained.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the environment to ensure that it is rich in print, particularly with regard to labelling to further encourage children's independence in selecting and carrying out activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is highly professional. She organises her provision exceptionally well, she has a detailed range of policies and procedures in place which are used effectively to safeguard children. This is complemented with a comprehensive understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures to follow should she have any concerns. Consequently, children are thoroughly protected.

Comprehensive written risk assessments are in place for the home environment and outings. Consequently, the chance of accidental injury is significantly reduced. Excellent daily practices ensure children's safety when on outings. For example, identity cards are taken to inform others of the children's name, age and contact details should an accident happen to the childminder. The childminder continues to show a commitment to developing her knowledge through attending relevant training, such as, National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in childcare learning and development. This is reflected in the good quality care and education she provides. Children access play opportunities through the good organisation of space and resources. They independently make choices about their play as they access some resources from low level storage systems and request alternate resources. However, these are not all effectively labelled and this has a slightly negative impact on their decision making and independence skills.

The childminder liaises exceptionally well with parents and very positive working relationships are forged. Effective induction procedures ensure that children's admission is gradual and tailored to meet their needs. Highly detailed information about children's requirements and starting points is acquired from parents and recorded. Through this the childminder establishes an excellent understanding of children's initial needs and abilities. Beautifully presented and very well organised packs are provided for parents. They effectively inform them of the service provided. For example, lost child policy, complaints procedure and play and learning information. The childminder is very proactive in encouraging parents to be involved in their children's learning at home through highlighted activities. Very positive comments are received from both parents and children, such as, 'very happy with the service' and 'she is kind and helps me with my homework'. Highly effective systems are in place to liaise with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder links with the nursery setting to establish the current themes and provides children with follow on activities to extend and challenge their learning. This ensures continuity and cohesion. The childminder is enthusiastic about her chosen career and has a vision of the process to improve the quality of service she offers. She has completed a detailed self-evaluation form, which has helped her to focus on the service she offers. She complements this by engaging parents and children in evaluating the care and education provided. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been positively addressed and this has had a positive impact on improving the quality.

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

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children engage in a range of activities that inspire their learning. Consequently, children make good progress in their development. They benefit from a flexible routine including a balance of child-centred and adult-led activities. Children are happy, settled and relate very well to the childminder. She joins in with their play and extends their learning through effective questioning. For example, as they complete life cycle puzzles. Children develop an understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Consequently, they are polite and very well behaved. Children's communication skills are developing extremely well.

Children engage in meaningful conversation with the childminder. For example, a child explains the equipment he wears to look at fish underwater. Children develop a good awareness of living things and their environment as they visit the local park and farm. A variety of creative activities, including hand painting, mixing colours and sticking, promote children's self-expression, whilst having fun. Children develop their physical skills as they confidently use scissors to cut. They eagerly explore with letters and use magnets to write their name. Children confidently link sounds to letters, such as, 'J is for Jacqui'. Children count, identify shapes and colours through everyday fun activities. They develop a good understanding of others as they are actively involved in cultural celebrations, such as, Chinese New Year and access a range of resources to promote positive images of others. Children access a range of resources to promote their skills for the future. For example, they use the mouse to navigate their way around selected programmes on the laptop computer.

The childminder has a good understanding of the children in her care. She has devised flexible monthly plans. However, at the present time she links her themes to the nursery setting to further promote outcomes for children. The childminder makes regular observations and assessments of children's learning. They are collated in individual files with detailed written explanations linked to the areas of learning. The next steps are recorded, this enables the childminder to effectively plan for children's future learning.

Children are welcomed into a clean, comfortable and well-maintained environment. Their knowledge about personal safety is encouraged by gentle reminders from the childminder to pick up the toys so they do not trip, road safety discussions and regular fire drill practises. This positively contributes to children developing a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe. Children enjoy a range of activities that contribute to good health. For example, they visit the local park to develop their physical skills as they climb on the apparatus. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of healthy food choices through ongoing discussion. Children discuss the types of food that are good for them, such as, cucumber and broccoli. Children constantly learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and become increasingly independent in their personal care. They are provided with separate hand towels and cutlery and this effectively reduces the risk of cross-infection. Effective procedures ensure children are cared for appropriately when ill. This reduces the risk of the spread of infection. The childminder has all the required documents in place to ensure children's health is effectively promoted.

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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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	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	1
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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