

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	221989
Inspection date	11/04/2011
Inspector	Melanie Calway
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 1992. She lives with her husband in a village near to Ely, Cambridgeshire. The ground floor is used for childminding and a first floor bedroom is used for sleeping. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age group. She is currently minding six children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. This childminder is also registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to collect children from the local school and pre-school and takes them on regular outings to the shop and the park. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and has completed a local authority quality assurance scheme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder knows them very well; she generally provides a healthy balance of foods throughout the day. She uses observations of their play and learning to plan activities to help them to progress. Routines are flexible, child-centred and children benefit from lots of outdoor play and an extensive range of resources in most areas. The childminder has a very positive relationship with parents and a regular exchange takes place about children's care and development, making them active partners in their child's learning. The childminder reflects on her practice and uses training opportunities to keep her knowledge and skills up-to-date.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend further the opportunities and resources for exploration and investigation using natural materials
- improve further the provision of healthy snacks for children throughout the day.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect because all members of the household have had the appropriate checks. The childminder has a clear safeguarding policy and is aware of her duty to refer any concerns she may

have about children's welfare. She has all the information she needs to be able to take appropriate action and has recently updated her training in safeguarding. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The childminder has conducted a risk assessment covering all areas of the house and ensures that children stay within certain areas. Children are very clear about the boundaries and safety rules. Children are kept safe when they go out as there are good procedures for outings. They are protected from the risk of fire as regular drills are practised to ensure that the childminder and the children know what to do in the event of a fire or emergency.

Children access a wide range of resources. A selection of items is put out for them which are age-appropriate and based on their interests. They can ask the childminder for additional resources. Children access the outdoor area freely and benefit from plenty of active, outdoor play. The childminder values children as individuals and ensures that individual, family and cultural backgrounds are respected. The childminder provides parents with useful information about the service in the form of a brochure and a wide range of policies. A regular exchange about children's learning takes place. Daily diaries keep parents informed about children's care, activities and any significant achievements. Parents are encouraged to add to the diaries and the learning records to make them active partners in the assessment process and in their children's learning. For example, they comment that they will follow up at home on areas that the childminder has decided to focus on. The childminder also exchanges information about children's learning when they attend other settings to ensure effective continuity and progression. She has taken part in a quality assurance scheme and has conducted a self-evaluation to reflect on her practice and identify areas for improvement.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder. They play well together and are absorbed and involved in the activities on offer. The childminder uses her observations of their achievements to plan activities which will extend their learning, for example, ensuring that children who are beginning to develop an interest in print and writing have opportunities to practise and develop their skills. She knows them very well and is aware of their interests and preoccupations and provides them with resources and activities which will interest them. Children communicate very well with the childminder and with each other and are able to negotiate and express their ideas as they develop their role play. Children access paper and pencils for drawing and writing from a chest of drawers in the conservatory. They learn to problem solve as they play in the water tray and use the language of shape and size, saying 'I made a big one' as they blow bubbles. Construction sets and puzzles also aid this area of learning. The childminder uses nursery rhymes with young children to introduce numbers and counting.

Children learn about the world around them as they engage in role play, pretending to be at a wedding or flying away on holiday. The childminder uses opportunities such as the walk to school to encourage them to look about them to become aware of their community and the natural world. She has made up a

treasure basket for babies and toddlers to explore different objects. Children have great fun pouring water and discovering its properties. Occasionally they do some planting at the front of the house. However, in the back garden opportunities for exploration and investigation using other natural materials are not fully developed. Older children are able to use a computer and younger children become familiar with technology through using toys such as tills or telephones. Children use their imaginations very well, sustaining their role play for long periods with different ages playing well together. They blow bubbles for the wedding disco or prepare the wedding food. They are very creative and together with the childminder they make up their own games and play them. Craft materials are stored where children can access them easily to undertake any craft projects. Children are able to be active outside playing on the ride-on toys and carrying and pouring containers of water. They visit a local park regularly for exercise on larger equipment.

Children's health is promoted well. They get plenty of fresh air and active play. They walk to school and pre-school and so get regular exercise. In warm weather they are reminded to wear hats and top up their sun cream. Children's drinks are easily accessible. Children are provided with a balanced diet overall and the childminder talks to them to help them to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Although fresh fruit is offered throughout the day, children have sweet biscuits for mid-morning and afternoon snacks and so are not always provided with healthy snacks to help promote their understanding of healthy eating. Children develop a very good awareness of how to keep safe as they learn the safety rules. The walk to school is used to help them understand the dangers of traffic and children of a young age show that they have learned about road safety when they call out 'All clear!' before they cross a driveway. The childminder uses books and stories to further enhance their understanding, for example, reading a book about fire after doing a fire drill so they understand why they are doing it. Children of all ages play well together and the childminder encourages them to share and take turns. They develop positive relationships with each other and with the childminder. They are learning to understand each other's needs and how to behave well. They are learning skills for the future as they learn to form relationships and make good progress in all areas of learning.

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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