

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	311214
Inspection date	27/04/2011
Inspector	Susan Heap
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1992. She lives with partner in Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, close to shops, parks, schools and public transport links. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. The whole of the ground floor and two bedrooms and bathroom on the first floor are used for childminding. The garden is used for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding five children in this age group. The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. When working with an assistant she may care for seven children under eight years at any one time, no more than six of whom may be in the early years age range.

The childminder collects children from the local school and goes to several toddler groups regularly. The family has two dogs, two rabbits and fish.

The childminder is a member of the Children Come First childminding network which provides funded early education 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 welcoming, stimulating and fun environment where children flourish. They benefit from a superb range of play and learning experiences which enable them to make very good progress. The childminder has an excellent understanding of the children's individual needs and maintains very positive partnerships with parents. Effective methods enable her to monitor and record children's progress. Excellent documentation and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare and safety. The childminder is highly effective in reflecting on her practice to make ongoing improvements. These are highly successful in promoting a continuous high quality service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- develop ways of encouraging parents to share their observations of their children's activities and interests to help inform future planning for their individual needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a robust understanding of safeguarding children and is clear of her role and responsibilities to protect children at all times. She has attended relevant training and all contact details and procedures are readily available. Children's safety is paramount and the childminder is watchful and attentive to them which ensures their safety and wellbeing. She has thorough written risk assessments covering her home and activities. These are implemented consistently and robustly and, through the childminder's vigilance, these ensure that risks to children are minimised. For example, she actively sought the views of parents before implementing new procedures for the collection of children from school. All members of the household over the age of 16 or those who work as assistants have completed the required vetting procedures.

The childminder efficiently organises her home, time and resources extremely well to support children and meet their varying routines and needs. Toys and resources are plentiful, are of exceptional quality and fully support children's individual play, learning and development. The childminder values each child as an individual and has a positive and inclusive approach to all aspects of diversity. This is reflected in her practice and many of the resources available, such as posters, empathy dolls, books and small world figures. The childminder has an exemplary commitment to ongoing improvement. The recommendation from the last inspection has been successfully completed. She has attended many workshops and training days to support and enhance her existing knowledge and skills, continually reflecting on her practice to ensure continuous improvement. She involves children in this, such as choosing fun, exciting new toys and equipment which capture their interest and promote inclusion.

She gathers comprehensive details about the children and all written parental consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents wishes. She maintains a file containing a delightful variety of photographs of activities done with the children which gives parents an opportunity to make informed decisions about their children's care. Very positive and trusting partnerships with parents are established and their comments and feedback are welcomed and encouraged, both verbally and through questionnaires. She promotes frequent two-way communication, for example, using a daily diary for children under the age of two which helps to promote continuity of care, and she emails weekly menus, activity plans and newsletters to them. Ways of encouraging parents to add their comments and observations to children's learning journeys are not fully established.

Comments from parents are extremely positive about the high quality of care, activities and information provided the childminder's flexibility and excellent service provided, the 'close, loving relationship' children have formed with her, and her 'reliable, nurturing nature'. The childminder establishes close links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to encourage promotion and enhancement of children's learning and development. She works effectively in partnership with other local childminders through attendance at local groups. This

enables children to build up secure trusting relationships with other adults and means that each childminder can provide emergency cover or continuity of care when needed, for example, at times of maternity leave, holidays or sickness.

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

Children are extremely happy and relaxed with the childminder and interaction between them is fun and spontaneous. For example, they engage in friendly banter and the childminder listens attentively to them. She plays alongside the children at their level when supporting the youngest children and children actively seek her company to join in role play activities, such as a tea party. She skilfully knows when to step back and let them concentrate and discover for themselves when exploring the sand or playing a game of skittles. She has a secure knowledge and understanding of each child's individual needs and personalities, valuing the uniqueness of each child and ensuring they are all included. She promotes a positive appreciation of diversity through activities, books and introducing festivals.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They have a secure understanding of what is acceptable. They play an active part in drawing up the ground rules within the household which gives them an extremely strong sense of ownership and belonging. All children play exceptionally well together and have formed firm friendships with each other. They respond very positively to the childminder who has a bright and cheery manner and treats children with kindness and respect at all times. All children have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They know to walk safely in the house, where to assemble, and not to go and collect their personal belongings in case of a fire. Children's understanding of personal safety is further enhanced by wearing high visibility vests on outings and planned activities such as talking about fire safety.

Children play an active part in decision making and how they spend their day. They choose their activities from a range of laminated picture cards which are then displayed on the noticeboard. Many resources are stored at low-level in storage baskets which enable children to make further choices. This is particularly beneficial for the youngest children and helps to develop their independence and initiate their own play. A superb range of toys offer ongoing interest and challenge to the children and they make very good progress in their learning and development. They delight in taking their own photographs with a digital camera and practice their mark-making skills with a variety of tools and equipment. For example, children use magnetic letters to correctly spell their name or use notebooks and pencils to record how many skittles they have knocked over. They enjoy painting in the outdoor area and their efforts are valued and displayed around the home.

The childminder records her observations of children's play and their progress in each of the six areas of learning. These are used effectively to identify the next steps in children's learning and development and inform future planning. She has an exemplary understanding that children learn best through fun activities and provides many first-hand experiences which follow their own interests. For

example, she recently planned activities around a seaside theme, which involved children playing in the sand, sitting in child-sized deckchairs, eating ice cream cones and a day trip to the beach. Children's imaginative play is well supported with small world toys, a kitchen, puppets, buggies and dolls to encourage role-play. Children concentrate for considerable periods, engrossed in their play, and actively choose to play in the outdoor area. They show great balance, control and coordination as they ride on scooters, carefully moving in and out of the cones.

Children's personal hygiene is excellently promoted and children are familiar with the daily routines. Each child has their own facecloth, towel, hairbrush and comb in their own drawer which gives them a sense of belonging. Children independently wash their own hands after going to the bathroom and know to use 'germ gel' when they have sneezed and used a tissue. Each child chooses a healthy meal from the laminated picture cards which are then incorporated into the weekly menu. This enables children to develop an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and also recognise and value individual preferences. A new area of interest is the purchase of a greenhouse and children have planted seeds of onions, carrots, lettuce and tomatoes to learn about the food chain.

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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