

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/05/2011
Inspector	Glenda Field
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 April 2003. She lives with her husband who is also a registered childminder. They live in Lowestoft within walking distance of local amenities. The whole of the bungalow is used for childminding. A fully enclosed rear garden is available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for six children at any one time, with a maximum of three children under five years. When childminding alongside her husband all six of the children may be under five years. Overnight care may be provided for two children. The childminder and her husband currently care for a total of 14 children, of whom, nine are within the early years age range. All attend on a part-time basis. The childminder takes the overall lead in childminding practice. The co-childminder works in close partnership. An assistant is also employed.

Children are transported by car. The childminder and co-childminder walk to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. They take children to visit various local attractions and activities, the local library, shops and parks and the SureStart Children's Centre. The childminder is registered 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 outstanding.

Children feel extremely safe and content in the childminder's welcoming and relaxed home. All children make rapid progress in their learning and development as the childminder has well-developed knowledge of each child's needs to ensure that, overall, their welfare and learning is successfully promoted. The childminder has excellent partnerships with parents and other agencies with which children are connected. Consequently, all children are fully included and are thriving in her care. All policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the safety and welfare of all children is effectively promoted. The childminder has positive plans for the future of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continuing to promote positive attitudes to diversity through activities and resources that encourage children to talk about similarities and differences and the reasons for these
- develop further the self-evaluation process to clearly identify specific areas for future improvements in practice and the impact on outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder significantly enhances the development and welfare of children as she has a very good understanding of safeguarding requirements. She is confident to report concerns following the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out to enable children to play safely indoors, outdoors and on outings. The environment is extremely safe and conducive to learning, resulting in children thriving and developing independence and self-confidence.

All necessary policies and procedures are in place to ensure the effective management of the setting. They are robust and effective to support the welfare and development of children and are routinely reviewed and shared with parents. As a result, parents are able to make fully-informed decisions about their children's care and are kept up to date with any changes about the care provided. The childminder and her co-childminder are fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of the setting and have a clear and achievable plan for developing and moving forward in their continuous improvement.

The views of parents are included in their evaluation to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of those using their childminding service. Parents speak very highly of the setting, commenting that on collection their children are happy and relaxed and that the childminder engages them in many types of play and maintains a great level of care and communication with parents. The childminder also works closely with other agencies with whom children are connected. For example, the Well-Family-Co-ordinator of the local SureStart Children's Centre states that the childminder has excellent listening skills and can communicate with both adults and children, and manages on all levels to be supportive and offer advice. The setting also liaises with other settings that children attend such as pre-schools to ensure continuity of care.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and consequently, children are well cared for and effectively supported. She, alongside her co-childminder, make observations of each child in their care. Children's achievements are assessed and linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning. Individual children's next steps are identified and used to plan further challenging activities. All information is recorded in children's learning records and made available to parents.

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

Children are extremely well settled and contented in the childminder's care because they are provided with enthusiastic attention and a superb range of appropriate activities. Toys and activities are set out prior to the children's arrival

so that they can access them independently. They make rapid progress in their learning because the childminder, alongside her co-childminder, is supportive to their individual needs. Children are naturally challenged in their play as the childminder extends their learning by asking questions that encourage them to think further. Children are developing social skills and a sense of responsibility for their own actions as the childminder uses encouragement and positive reinforcement to reward them as they take turns or follow rules. Children are learning to show respect for themselves, others and their environment.

They are able to self-select resources from low-level shelving and floor based containers, thus encouraging their independence. Children enjoy frequent walks for fresh air and exercise and visit the local parks for physical play. They also make frequent visits to the local children's centre where they have opportunities to mix and socialise with other children. Children enjoy mark-making and enjoy reading books with the childminders. The books are displayed to enable children to develop their interest in looking at books independently. Children enjoy building with bricks and play together with the childminder; who supports them to share and take turns and encourages them to name colours and count how many.

Children have many opportunities to learn about the world they live in and begin to investigate the trees, leaves and plants when playing in the garden. For example, in the current dry weather spell, children asked why the daffodils die. This led to children being given explanations of the seasons by the childminder. Children also became very curious when many chrysalis appeared on the cherry tree in the garden. The childminders explained these would eventually change into butterflies or moths. Children have excellent opportunities to dig and grow flowers in the garden. For example, they planted sunflower seeds in pots and watched them grow. Parents also become involved in children's learning by bringing flower seeds for children to plant and grow. Resources that reflect positive attitudes to diversity such as, small world characters, books and puzzles are also available. However, the childminder has identified that she needs to develop further activities and resources that encourage children to talk about similarities and differences.

Children's health, physical and dietary needs are met to an exceptional standard. They take part in emergency evacuation procedures and learn about road safety as they go on outings with the childminder. Children understand the importance of washing their hands and the need to put toys away to avoid trips and falls. The childminder promotes healthy eating, providing a balanced and varied diet. Active physical play is encouraged to help children develop physical skills and their individual needs with regard to rest are met well.

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	2
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	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	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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