

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	20/05/2011
Inspector	Julie Neal
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 2010. She lives in Barnstaple in North Devon with her husband and two sons. Childcare mainly takes place on the ground floor of the childminder's home, and there is an enclosed garden suitable for outdoor play. The family have a pet cat.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register, and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder may care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than two of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in the early years age group. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for one child under eight years of age.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met very well overall. They enjoy an extremely inclusive environment. There are exceptionally good relationships with parents which ensure that the childminder having an in depth knowledge of each child's interests and abilities. The childminder uses this information in conjunction with her excellent observations of children to develop extremely focussed individualised learning plans for each child. As a result, children make excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. The childminder's self-evaluations are good, and her action plans for the future are well focused on achieving and sustaining high quality outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the processes used to record medicines given to children to more clearly highlight where a treatment has been administered by parents prior to their child's arrival at the setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and implements these well. As a result, children are safeguarded well and protected from harm. The childminder is secure in her understanding of safeguarding issues, and confident in her knowledge of the

appropriate procedures to follow should she have concerns regarding children's well-being. She has taken part in training to improve and update her safeguarding knowledge, and makes good use of resources, such as professional journals and the internet, to remain informed of best practice issues relating to child protection. The childminder uses effectively the information she has gained. For instance, she has recently reviewed her safeguarding policies and related procedures to ensure these provide parents with accurate information about the processes the childminder must follow in order to keep children safe from harm. The childminder makes very good risk assessments of all areas of her home, and of resources and activities enjoyed by children. Risk assessments relating to outings are rigorous and focus very well on developing children's understanding of how to remain safe in different situations. For example, procedures for local walks in the community vary according to each child's awareness of road safety. Documentation that supports children's welfare is, overall, maintained well, and all regulatory requirements related to record keeping are met. However, there are some weaknesses in aspects of records relating to medicines given to children. The childminder ensures that, if parents wish her to administer a medicine or treatment, prior written permission is given. She records when she has given medicines and parents countersign to confirm they have been informed. However, documents are not always clear in identifying when a dose of a medicine has been given to children in their own home prior to arrival at the childminder's.

The childminder reflects well on her practice and, as a result, her self-evaluations are insightful, clearly identifying where she can use and develop her skills to improve outcomes for children. For example, the childminder has experience in using sign language and has considered how she can introduce this with children in order to broaden their experience of different ways of communicating. The childminder invites feedback from parents and uses this effectively in her self-evaluations to identify how partnerships can be further developed. For example, information from parents was used very well to develop ways of linking aspects of children's learning to activities enjoyed at home. Children now bring 'chatter bags' with items from home to prompt discussions about their families and things they enjoy doing together. Therefore, the childminder develops excellent relationships with parents, and as a result, information about each child's needs, and their progress and development, is shared extremely well. The extremely strong relationships with parents are demonstrated particularly well in the extremely good way the childminder prepares to support children who have English as an additional language. Simple yet effective measures make families feel welcome, such as the childminder greeting them in their home languages and ensuring books and other resources reflect their cultures and traditions appropriately. Some children also attend other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as nurseries or pre-schools. The childminder has been proactive in developing links with key people in these settings in order to share information about children's learning and development, which she includes in each child's individual plans.

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

Children's welfare, learning and development is promoted very well overall. Health promotion with children is effective in developing their awareness of personal hygiene, a healthy diet, and how their bodies work. For example, children are aware of the possible risks of sunburn, and before going outside to play they check whether they need to re-apply sun cream in order to remain protected. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks, for example, at snack time they have a very good choice of fruit and vegetables. The childminder raises children's awareness of a healthy diet through interesting activities, such as designing a vegetable patch, and growing salad and strawberries, which they are keen to eat. Children have made up a 'fruit salad' song about some of their favourite foods, which they sing and perform actions to. The childminder supports children's developing understanding of the importance of personal hygiene very well. For example, just prior to snack time, children immensely enjoyed a gloriously messy painting activity where they have used their hands to mix paints and to create their own colourful and unique works of art. As they wash their hands thoroughly, some children show the childminder that a particular shade of paint seems to have 'died' their fingers. Children express concern that, despite using lots of soap, the marks remain. The childminder reassures them that their hands are clean, and they can have their snack, and she explains that sometimes materials like paint and ink leave marks that can take a while to fade. Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The childminder organises practices of her emergency evacuation procedures with sufficient frequency to ensure that all children have a secure understanding of what to do if there is a fire. Everyday routines are used extremely well to ensure children learn how to use tools such as knives safely. For example, children enjoy helping the childminder to peel and chop fruit for snack, using appropriately sharp knives for the task. Children explain how they use these safely, such as, always checking that the sharp edge is facing down.

Children make excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. This is because the childminder has developed extremely effective systems of individualised planning that focus very well on promoting each child's next steps in learning. The childminder uses her excellent observations of children to ensure that, when planning future activities, she is building on their prior learning. For example, children have immensely enjoyed planning their vegetable patch, and planting and growing seeds. The childminder has organised a visit to an allotment garden so that children can see a much wider range of fruit and vegetables growing, and to provide them with more ideas for things they can grow and eat themselves. The childminder monitors children's progress towards the early learning goals extremely well. Children's learning and development records are, overall, very well maintained and reflect the excellent progress they are making. The childminder regularly reviews each child's progress with parents, and they provide their own observations of their children's achievements, which are included in individual learning plans.

Children are keen and eager learners who confidently explore the excellent range

of toys and equipment that are easily accessible to them to choose from as they play. The childminder makes extremely good use of resources to extend and develop children's learning. For example, children have chosen a favourite story about a farmer. The childminder uses a variety of props, such as dolls, puppets, and vegetables, to encourage children to think about what they know of the story and to predict which order the different characters come into it. Children use their problem-solving skills extremely well in a variety of different contexts. For example, while slicing fruit, children count the number of pieces and calculate how many they will have if they slice each piece in half. Children decide to use an electronic timer to see how long an activity takes them; they set this to three minutes. When there is one minute left, children identify that they need longer and decide to reset the timer to five minutes. When they have completed their activity they check the timer and identify that there are still two minutes left. Children's self-esteem is extremely good; they benefit from the immensely positive environment promoted by the childminder. As a result, children are confident that their needs will be met, and they demonstrate that they feel secure in the exceptionally warm and affectionate relationships they develop with the childminder and her family.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	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	1
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	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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