

## Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	222778
<b>Inspection date</b>	08/06/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Anna Davies
<b>Type of setting</b>	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 16 year old son in a residential area close to the centre of Willingham, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities, such as, schools, the library, shops and parks. The family keep fish.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She 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 minding five children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder is working towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder provides a good range of learning opportunities and activities for children. The childminder uses her clear knowledge about children as individuals to ensure that she provides an inclusive environment where children feel safe, secure and valued. She has established good working relationships with parents and this ensures children's individual needs are well met. Partnerships with other providers where children attend more than one setting are less well established. The childminder evaluates her practice and demonstrates a firm commitment towards seeking to continuously improve and develop aspects of her provision.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing regular and ongoing information about children's learning and development
- develop the use of observations and assessments to identify next steps across all areas of learning and use this information to plan and deliver activities that support individual learning
- record details of evacuation drills in a fire log book as well as any problems encountered and how they were resolved.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding procedures are secure; the childminder has attended training in this area, demonstrates a clear understanding of the signs of abuse and is clear about

whom to contact for advice or to make a referral. She is just in the process of completing the necessary forms for people in her household who have just turned 16 years of age so that they can be appropriately vetted. The childminder has a good understanding of minimising potential risks to children's safety and as a result the environment in which children are cared for, is very safe and secure. This is backed up by records of risk assessments for both the indoor and outdoor environment as well as for all types of outings that children take part in. Older children demonstrate an evident understanding of safety as they tell younger children 'you won't put that in your mouth will you?' as they complete jigsaws together. Since the last inspection regular evacuation drills are practised to ensure that children are confident about their safety in the event of an emergency. However, the childminder does not maintain a record of these drills in a fire log book along with any problems encountered and how they were resolved.

The childminder provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where each child is valued and they are clearly settled and comfortable in her care. She works closely with parents to ensure that children's changing needs on a day to day basis, are fully met. The childminder states she is happy to work with outside agencies as necessary in order to meet and support children's additional needs effectively. Children freely access a good range of toys and art and craft resources from low-level units, enabling them to make independent choices in their play. A good variety of outdoor play equipment and resources are available to children so that they enjoy learning outdoors. For example, they balance on a swinging platform and younger children show increasing confidence in their physical abilities by independently climbing the steps to the slide and negotiating a way down. The childminding provision is well organised and managed. For example, the childminder collects many resources to help support the different themed activities that she engages children's interest in.

Good relationships with parents exist. The childminder is responsive towards comments and suggestions from parents. A variety of methods of information sharing are available dependent on what suits parents, such as, daily diaries, information sheets or verbal discussions. This ensures a useful exchange of information to help the childminder meet children's needs. 'Thank you' letters and cards offer very positive feedback about the childminders provision, such as, 'She is kind and gentle' and 'an important part of the children's lives'. The childminder has a positive attitude towards liaising with other settings also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in her care and has basic working partnerships in place. Some information about children learning and development has previously been shared but systems to ensure that this happens on a regular and ongoing basis as well as for all children attending more than one setting, are not yet established. This does not help to provide consistent learning experiences between settings.

The childminder has a clear vision and wants to promote positive outcomes for children in her care and to ensure that they gain maximum confidence ready for when they start school. There are clear systems of self-evaluation in place which enables the childminder to devise action plans and task lists of her priorities for improvement. She is committed to training and has attended many courses since the last inspection. She is keen to implement ideas from these, such as, adding

washing up liquid to puddles to enable children to splash and create bubbles or the development of outdoor areas to suit specific interests. The childminder has been proactive in applying for and using a grant to develop her outdoor area as well as to provide a computer for the children to develop their early technology skills. The outdoor area is an ongoing project and the childminder is looking at further ways for children to be able to access a wider range of toys and resources whilst playing outside. These well targeted aspects for development demonstrate the childminder's good capacity to improve.

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

Children are offered a good range of activities to promote their learning across all areas. The childminder spends her time supporting child-initiated and adult-led activities and children enjoy her company. She asks questions to challenge children's thinking such as 'What kind of animal could you make?' as children create objects from play dough. This extends children's own ideas as they tell her that they are making a ladybird and solve simple problems at the same time, such as, how to recreate the 'black spots' when they do not have black play dough. The childminder effectively extends this activity by asking the child if they would like to create a home for their ladybird from a cardboard box and the child demonstrates great pride as she explains that she would like to take this to show her friends at pre-school later in the day.

Planning is based on children's interests and activity ideas linked to themes. This is flexible to incorporate children's choices and spontaneous events. Regular observations, photographs and examples of children's work, all evidence where children are at in their learning. The childminder has a general understanding of the areas of development she is working on with individual children. However, the use of next steps is not yet secure enough or linked to planning effectively to ensure that this key information can be used during activities to promote highly individualised learning opportunities for all children.

Children are very settled, happy and secure in the childminder's care and home. They learn good manners and learn to appreciate others. They are given many opportunities to make choices, such as, what sort of crayons they would like to colour with and which cup and straw they would like at snack time, this helps promote independent thinking and decision making. Children have good opportunities to mark-make. For example, younger children enjoy using sponges, brushes, pens as well as their hands on the 'Aqua Draw' pad whilst older children show developing skills and pencil control as they practise writing letters and numbers. They use emergent writing during specific activities designed to encourage this as well as on their own art work to label drawings they have done. Children are encouraged to develop a love of books and reading and this is further extended by trips to the local library. Children are confident communicators.

Older children ably express their ideas and thoughts during play and younger children understand what is said to them and express their feelings confidently. Older children confidently use number and size language in their play. For

example, they talk about how many spots their ladybird will have on it and its 'eight legs' and explain to others that they have to 'tidy up a tiny bit more'. They solve simple problems, such as, how to best represent with coloured bricks, the food and drink that different toy animals need, using the green ones for grass and the blue ones for water. Younger children are curious about what they observe in their surroundings, such as, the dustbin men and have previously enjoyed watching the workmen as they use the digger to lay a patio outside. They have good opportunities to learn about growing as they have planted and harvested a wide range of fruit and vegetables. Pond dipping and walks in the local village give children opportunities to learn about nature and seasonal changes. Children are developing vital technology skills as they use the mouse to make selections on screen or the keyboard to 'write' for a different purpose.

Children learn about their local community through trips out and visits to a group where they have opportunities to socialise with others. They also learn about those less fortunate than themselves, for example, as they take part in a 'Toddle Waddle' for charity. Children are developing an awareness of the diverse society in which they live. They celebrate a variety of multicultural festivals as well as those specifically relevant to themselves and use a good range of resources, such as, pieces of sequinned material to learn about traditional dress. All of these simple activities begin to lay secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children get plenty of exercise and fresh air on regular walks and time spent in the garden, they are taught about how this contributes towards a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy being outside and photographs show children challenging their own physical skills, climbing laddered climbing frames and balancing on beams. Children's creative development is effectively promoted through a good range of activities including arts and crafts, role-play, music and dressing up. For example, they enjoy making junk model sea creatures, using shaving foam and gloop, making shapes in polystyrene with a variety of tools and creating people using balloons.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Children are cared for in a clean, tidy and hygienic environment. They are learning to follow good hygiene routines in a fun way. For example, children say that the soap is 'magic' because it senses when their hand is underneath before dispensing liquid soap. Meals and snacks for the younger children are provided by parents and they are given guidance as to food provision so that the childminder maintains her commitment towards healthy eating. Drinks are freely accessible to children on the low-level kitchen table so that they may help themselves when they feel thirsty. Accident and medication records are well maintained and contain all relevant details to ensure children's safety and well-being. The childminder has renewed her first aid qualification since the last inspection which ensures that she is able to deal effectively with minor injuries. The childminder has a clear understanding of behaviour management. She discusses any issues and strategies with parents to ensure a consistent approach. She gives clear explanations in an age-appropriate way, encouraging children to respect others.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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