

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	24/06/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
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 1997. She lives with her husband, two adult sons and one child aged 17 years in a residential area on the outskirts of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The whole of the ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding, as well as the upstairs bathroom. There are also toilet facilities downstairs. The house is within walking distance of local amenities, such as schools, the library, toddler groups, shops and parks. The family have three dogs

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 three children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are offered a good range of stimulating activities and learning experiences which ensures that they make good progress in their learning and development. Most of the required policies, procedures and records are in place and used effectively to safeguard children's health, safety and welfare. The childminder truly recognises and embraces each child's individuality and effectively promotes inclusive practice so that children feel secure and valued. The childminder has built up excellent partnerships with parents. Through recently self-evaluating her practice, the childminder has a clear picture of her strengths and areas for further development. She demonstrates a firm willingness, commitment and enthusiasm towards continually developing her practice to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children she cares for.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure the daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance are accurately recorded (Documentation). 08/07/2011

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

- update the complaints policy to ensure that it contains the correct telephone number for Ofsted and details of the timescale within which a complaint will

- be responded to
- develop further knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology so that effective support can be given to children as they develop these skills.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children procedures and, in the last year, has attended training in this area. Her knowledge is underpinned by a clear policy which is shared with parents and a range of supportive documents are able to be referred to should she have concerns about a child in her care. Comprehensive risk assessments are conducted for the premises, all types of outings, as well as for individual children. These documents show that the childminder has a good understanding of minimising most risks to children's safety, such as ensuring that blind cords are short so that they do not hang low enough to pose a risk to children. Clear procedures for outings demonstrate the childminder's priority for ensuring children's safety when out. For example, identification cards detailing emergency contact numbers are taken for use in event of an emergency and children are taught the importance of crossing roads safely. Children also learn about safety through gentle reminders, such as sitting whilst eating and drinking in case they choke and not climbing on the sofa in case they fall. A good range of written policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents. However, the information shared about the procedures to be followed in the event of a complaint being made does not include the most up-to-date telephone number for Ofsted or a timescale within which the complainant can expect a response. Required documentation is generally in place which underpins children's safety and welfare. However, the method used to record children's attendance is not accurate enough in terms of recording the actual times and hours of attendance which is a legal requirement.

The childminder promotes a highly inclusive setting where children's uniqueness is truly valued. She feels honoured to be entrusted to care for each and every child and parents comment that the childminder cares for the children as 'one of the family'. It is absolutely evident that the childminder plays a huge part in each child's life. The childminder's rapport with both children and their families helps her deliver extremely tailored care to each of the children she minds. A good range of toys and resources are accessible to children in the playroom. Children are confident to move toys and resources around, for example, into the lounge, for more space. Posters displayed in the playroom make it a welcoming room for young children. The childminder organises her time and routines so that children benefit from attendance at a range of local groups and from regular use of local amenities, such as the library and parks. The garden is sometimes used and children enjoy ball games outside the front of the house with the childminder.

Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers have been developed. A comprehensive range of information is gathered from parents when children start so that the childminder is clear about their individual needs and starting points. Detailed daily diaries are well used by childminders and parents to share regular

information. Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in their child's learning and to be able to continue this support at home. They have excellent information about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to help them embrace and support their child's development. Feedback from parents is extremely positive, commenting on the 'supportive, encouraging, warm and friendly' traits of the childminder as well as her flexibility, reliability and love for the children. The childminder is proactive in sharing information with other providers also delivering the EYFS to children in her care. This helps support and promote consistency for those children attending more than one setting.

The childminder demonstrates a clear passion and enthusiasm for her childminding and strives hard to find ways of improving those aspects that she finds more challenging, such as maintaining documentation. She has attended some training courses since the last inspection and has effectively addressed the recommendations that were previously raised. The childminder has recently completed a self-evaluation document which demonstrates that she knows her setting well and is able to identify key strengths and aspects for further development and improvement. Recent feedback from parents has been sought and the childminder is open to their suggestions and comments which help her develop her service to ensure that it meets the needs of its users.

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

Children are provided with a good range of learning experiences and activities to help them make good progress overall. Children's interests are well observed by the childminder. For example, they visit a shop selling hoovers because a child has a fascination with them and, under her supervision, she allows the child to use her 'real' Hoover which he thoroughly enjoys. The childminder spends all of her time interacting and playing with the children. She works hard to ensure that she promotes learning in all types of activities, including those that are child-initiated and spontaneous opportunities that arise. She has clear ideas about how to promote and enhance children's language development and discusses these with parents. For example, she answers children's questions with another question to extend their thinking and to encourage them to use their spoken language. When children use new words such as 'disgusting' she asks them what they mean to ensure that, as well as using new vocabulary, they understand the meaning of the words they use.

Each child has a scrapbook of photographs and observations which gives the childminder good information about where the children are across all six areas of learning. Tracker books are just being trialled and introduced to help the childminder clearly track children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Next steps, goals and objectives for the year are set for each child across all areas of learning. These are devised in full consultation with parents and their input about what they know about their child is highly valued and used very effectively to support children's future learning.

Children show an extremely strong sense of security and belonging. All children,

including those very new to the setting, are confident, settled and very happy in the childminder's care. They share excellent relationships, both with the childminder and each other. Manners are spontaneously used by young children and they talk to each other with respect and consideration. For example, even though the children are both eager to hold the postcard that has been sent from a friend, they readily take it in turns to hold it, look at the picture and talk about their own holidays. Given their young ages, children behave extremely well and the genuine love, praise and encouragement they receive from the childminder such as 'You can do it, you are clever' gives them very high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Children have good opportunities to mark-make and practise their emergent writing. They enjoy books and a love of reading and sharing stories is further promoted through weekly visits to the library. Children have access to a range of electronic toys which supports children in developing some understanding of technology. However, the childminder has identified that her own lack of knowledge in this area prevents her from offering the children opportunities to explore information technology further. Counting is filtered through successfully into play activities, such as counting the pieces of toast they pretend to make and the childminder challenges them as she pauses whilst counting to see if children can count further. Home-made flashcards further help children to begin to understand and recognise numerals. Children are curious about their environment such as when they hear the dog bark. They enjoy nature through trips to the local country park, observing wildlife around them or visits to the local pet shop to see the animals. A suitable range of resources reflecting diversity help young children to begin to understand and appreciate people's similarities and differences. All of these simple activities begin to lay secure foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children develop a good understanding of keeping healthy. Flashcards and place mats of various fruit and vegetables help to develop children's knowledge about healthy options. Children are encouraged to enjoy a healthy lifestyle through walking regularly, rather than using a car. Larger play equipment, which challenges children's physical abilities, is accessed at the local parks or at indoor soft play areas. Children's creativity is developing through a good range of art and craft activities and role play where they can develop their imagination. For example, they create their own meals using pretend food, making pretend toast in the toaster, turning the dial asking 'Shall I make it go on?'

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. They understand about following good hygiene routines and a reminder poster is clearly displayed in the downstairs bathroom. Food is healthy, balanced and nutritious. The childminder encourages children to make healthy choices on the whole, for example, offering children a banana before they eat a few crisps. Clear documentation is in place to record any medication administered. This has been improved since the last inspection which promotes children's well-being and safety. Accidents are recorded appropriately and the information shared with parents. The childminder's dogs have been carefully considered with regard to ensuring that they do not pose a health or safety risk to the children. A clear policy outlines the benefits of the pets for children as well as rules, such as never leaving children unsupervised with them, and permission from parents for children to interact with the dogs. The childminder has a good understanding of behaviour

management. She models cooperative behaviour during play, for example, saying 'My turn, your turn' which helps them to understand the concept of sharing. She is an excellent role model herself and, as a result, children behave extremely well and treat both her and each other, with full respect.

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	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	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	1
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:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- keep a daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (Records to be kept) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register). 08/07/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified under the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Records to be kept). 08/07/2011