

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	27/07/2011
Inspector	Alison Edwards
Type of setting	Childminder

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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

This childminder registered in 1999. He lives with his wife, adult son and two younger children aged 15 and 14 years in a house in a small town in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire. His wife is also registered as a childminder at these premises. Minded children use the ground floor of the house for play and have access to agreed areas of the first floor. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. A dog and degus are kept as family pets.

When working alone the childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five minded children aged under eight years, including three in the early years age range. When working together, he and his wife are registered to care for a maximum of nine minded children under the age of eight, including six in the early years age range. There are currently five minded children under the age of eight on roll, all in the early years age range. The childminder is also registered on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register to care for older children.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident and at ease in a lively and comfortable family environment which is, in general, suitably maintained to meet their needs. A wide variety of indoor and outdoor experiences and activities help children make good progress in their learning and develop a secure foundation for their future skills. The childminder and his wife have a clear understanding of the value of working with other agencies to support the inclusion of children with a range of individual backgrounds and needs. The childminder has taken appropriate steps to address the recommendations from his previous inspection and shows a ready willingness to further build on his existing experience and skills. However, he has not fully understood the legal requirement to comply with the conditions placed on his registration.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review arrangements to ensure that animals do not pose a health risk, with particular regard to ensuring that children do not come into contact with animal waste
- develop more consistent arrangements to seek and record information from parents to establish starting points for development
- review the use of resources and experiences to further challenge and extend children's understanding and awareness of individuality and cultural diversity
- establish more rigorous and systematic self-evaluation processes to accurately assess the current effectiveness of the childcare service against

robust criteria and to identify clear priorities and targets for further improvements to the existing quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Overall, the childminding is organised appropriately to meet children's needs. However, the childminder has not fully understood that the conditions placed on his registration and identified on his certificate of registration, are legally binding. Consequently, he and his wife have occasionally permitted children to use the large rear bedroom, although their conditions of registration do not allow this. This is an offence unless the provider gives a reasonable excuse. However, Ofsted does not intend to prosecute on this occasion. The childminder has a clear understanding of his duty to protect children from harm. Arrangements are in place to ensure that Ofsted is promptly informed of any significant changes to household composition or health, so enabling any necessary checks to be carried out. There are clear and detailed records of each child's individual contact, health and personal details, so ensuring that the childminder and his wife have ready access to essential information relating to the management of any specific medical or dietary needs. Systematic accident records are kept using separate sheets for each incident, so maintaining confidentiality, and clear procedures are in place to ensure that parents give specific instruction for any necessary medication administration. The childminder holds a current paediatric first aid qualification and seek parents written authorisation to obtain professional medical assistance if needed, so ensuring that he is able to act promptly in children's best interests in the event of any accident or sudden illness. The childminder works with his wife to undertake and record systematic risk assessments relating to the premises and to outings, for example, underpinning practical arrangements to ensure that the house and garden are secure. There are clear arrangements to ensure that only authorised adults are able to collect children and the childminder is careful to ascertain the identity of any visitors to the premises. The childminder has a clear awareness of the possible indicators of child abuse and neglect and fully recognises his responsibility to report any concerns or allegations of abuse in line with current locally- and nationally-agreed procedures. He clearly recognises the value of liaising closely with other agencies to help support children at risk of harm.

The experienced childminder implements a range of policies and procedures which, in general, appropriately reflect the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and underpin his ability to meet children's care and development needs. He recognises the value of continued training to build on his existing skills and knowledge and accordingly has plans in place to undertake a recognised early years qualification. However, he has not yet established the use of rigorous and systematic self-evaluation to accurately assess the current effectiveness of her provision against robust criteria and to identify clear priorities and targets for further improvements.

Both indoor and outdoor areas are used effectively to help support children's development and learning. For example, numbered hopscotch grids in the garden

help to extend children's mathematical awareness, as well as their movement skills. Indoors, the accessible books and playthings help children to develop good levels of purposeful decision-making and independence as they find and select favourite books or matching games. The childminder builds on children's awareness of their environment by extending their care and concern for small creatures, such as, snails and earwigs in the garden. Resources already include some items that reflect the wider community, such as, Chinese and Spanish dressing-up clothes. However, the childminder has not yet fully developed ways to consistently extend children's exploration and understanding of individual and cultural diversity. The childminder and his wife provide prospective parents with a useful range of information about their childcare service, so helping to promote a good shared understanding of children's care arrangements. Initial visits and meetings are used to converse with parents about each child's individual interests and preferences. However, consistent arrangements are not yet in place to make best use of such information by recording it, in order to provide clearly-documented starting points against which to review children's subsequent development. The childminder contributes to regular reviews of children's progress which are shared with parents at agreed intervals. They also provide the basis for sharing information with other early years settings, such as pre-schools or other specialist professionals, such as therapists, in order to promote continuity and progression in children's care.

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

The childminder encourages children to follow sensible hygiene procedures in their daily routines. For example, he reminds them to use individual hand towels, rather than family towels, when drying their hands. The childminder and his wife provide meals and snacks that take account of any specific dietary requirements and that contribute to a balanced diet, such as, stew with vegetables, chicken wraps and salad. Children enjoy energetic play in a range of weather conditions, for example, when children enjoy moving in different ways in the snow. The childminder helps children develop their dexterity from an early age, for example, encouraging a younger toddler to successfully turn the pages of a favourite book. Parents are informed in writing of arrangements for the care of the family dog. However, on occasion these arrangements are not fully effective in ensuring that children do not come into contact with animal waste in the garden.

Children across the early years age range readily interact with adults and older children in this busy family home. For example, a pre-school child confidently participates in a simple snooker game with older children. The childminder actively helps them to develop their turn-taking and cooperation skills through encouraging their sustained and purposeful interest in simple board and matching games. He and his wife make good use of a range of posters and signs to help build children's understanding of how to stay safe and act responsibly, for example in relation to using sun hats and sun cream and drinking plenty of water, to stay cool and hydrated in hot weather.

The childminder is developing confident and effective use of captioned photographs and written notes to observe and record children's progress across each main area of their learning. These are effectively used to contribute to shared planning and provision of a worthwhile and varied range of experiences, helping children to make good progress in their learning. For example, by building on a younger child's interest in filling and emptying containers to extend opportunities to compare mathematical ideas of size and capacity within practical sand and water play. The childminder builds on children's recent experiences and current interests to extend their imagination and language skills. For example, children show a keen interest in acting out and talking about favourite pirate stories and films from an early age, using simple props, such as, pretend telescopes and oars. They incorporate aspects of everyday technology in their pretend play, for example, using battery-operated light sticks and begin to make confident use of technology in daily routines, such as, by helping to take digital photographs. The childminder recognises and encourages young children's fascination with aspects of the natural world, for example, talking with a young child about the appearance and feel of a ladybird which has landed on her hand. The childminder effectively supports children's familiarity with favourite books, for example, by encouraging the anticipation of the sequence of events in a book about a bear. He makes good use of children's enjoyment of simple action songs. For example, he helps younger toddlers identify different parts of their bodies, such as, when participating in action songs and recognises an older child's growing confidence in number comparisons when anticipating how many little ducks will come swimming back.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	3
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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