

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY411203
Inspection date	27/07/2011
Inspector	Melanie Calway
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 with her husband and one child, aged two years, in Downham Market, Norfolk. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has a dog, a cat and a rabbit.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time, no more than two of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes children on outings to the park, the library, the market and to toddler groups. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met because the childminder knows them well and uses sensitive observations of their play and learning to plan for their progress. Children are settled and confident in the childminder's care and have built up good relationships with her. Useful information is provided for parents about the service, and a daily exchange of information takes place about children's care. The childminder evaluates her practice in order to identify areas for improvement and is committed to providing and maintaining a high quality service.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the partnership with parents further by encouraging them to contribute their knowledge of children's achievements and starting points to the assessment process
- establish systems to share information with other providers about individual children's learning and development when they attend other settings to ensure effective continuity and progression.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded from the risk of abuse or neglect because the childminder and members of her household have had the necessary checks. She has a clear policy on safeguarding and is aware of her responsibility to refer any concerns she may have about children's welfare. She has attended safeguarding training and has all the relevant information to be able to take appropriate action.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Detailed risk assessments have been carried out on all areas of the property and a separate risk assessment is carried out for each type of outing. In addition, thorough daily checks take place to ensure that the environment is safe. Necessary equipment is in place such as socket covers and stair gates and children are well supervised at all times. Pets are managed in such a way as to pose no health and safety risks to children, for example the dog is kept in a kennel in the garden and children are closely supervised if they do come into contact with the pets. Fire prevention equipment is present and tested frequently. A fire evacuation is practised monthly to ensure that the childminder and the children know what to do in the event of a fire or emergency.

Children are able to select resources independently. Toys and equipment are well organised and stored in boxes which are clearly labelled with print and pictures to encourage children to select items for themselves and to put toys away when they have finished with them. Children are able to play outside when they want to and the childminder makes available additional items for them as needed. The childminder has good relationship with parents and keeps in touch with them about their children using telephone calls and texts. Daily diaries and regular verbal exchanges also keep parents well informed. An informative prospectus outlines the provision's policies and procedures. Parents see their children's learning records at regular intervals and share some information about what children are learning. However, systems are not yet fully developed to encourage all parents to contribute to the assessment process their own knowledge of children's achievements and starting points across all the areas of learning. The childminder is aware of the need to communicate with other providers when children attend other settings to ensure effective continuity and progression, although she has not yet established systems to do this. The childminder is keen to develop the service and reflects on what she does, in order to evaluate her practice and identify ways to improve.

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

Children make good progress in the childminder's care. The childminder has a good knowledge of how they are developing and uses her observations of their play to plan the next steps for their progress, for example, children who are beginning to enjoy rhymes are provided with activities which encourage them to remember the rhymes and fill in the missing words. Children communicate confidently with the childminder who interacts well with them, getting down to their level and repeating words and phrases to promote their emerging language skills. Paper and pencils are available for children to draw, write and make marks. Children become familiar with print as they get out the place mats, which they have made, with their name on, for snack or selected items from the labelled boxes. Children become familiar with numbers and counting as the childminder counts with them as they play with the play dough saying 'how many wiggly worms have you got?'. Matching number puzzles, construction and shape sorters help children to become familiar with shapes and problem solving.

Children use their imaginations as they cut out shapes with the play dough or play with the water pen, using it to draw on the mat. Older children can access craft resources from a cupboard in the kitchen. Resources for role play are sorted into boxes from which children can choose. Children learn about the world around them through regular visits and outings, for example to the library or the local market. They also go to the childminder's allotment where they help to water the plants and pull up new potatoes. They become familiar with information technology as they use a small lap top and programmable toys. Children have developed strong relationships with the childminder and are becoming increasingly confident in her care. They are engaged in and motivated by the activities provided, often saying 'again' and smiling. Independence skills are promoted well as the children move around freely and select items from the storage boxes. They are encouraged to put toys away when they have finished with them and will pull out the nappy mat themselves when they need changing. Children develop social skills as they go out to regular toddler groups and play together. They develop skills of coordination and control as they play in the garden with balls or visit a local park to play on larger equipment.

Children's health is promoted well. They get plenty of fresh air and exercise as they play in the garden whenever they want, walk to local groups or visit the allotment. The childminder provides healthy home-cooked meals, using fresh ingredients and snacks including fresh fruit. Children are able to access their beakers with fresh drinking water at all times. Young children are learning about good hygiene as they learn how to wash their hands. A poster by the sink provides a visual prompt and the childminder gives children explanations about things which are good for us so that children learn how to live a healthy life style. Children learn about keeping safe as the childminder reminds them to be careful as they play, and talks to them about why they need to practise the fire drill. She also talks to them about road safety and stranger danger to help them to keep safe when they are out and about. They are learning skills for the future as they form relationships, developing independence and making good progress in all areas of learning.

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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	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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