

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	313696
Inspection date	19/09/2011
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst

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 has been registered since 1985. She lives with her husband in Leadgate village outside Consett, close to schools and local amenities. The childminder uses the whole of the ground floor and an upstairs bedroom for childminding purposes. There is an enclosed play area to the rear of the house. The family has one dog.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, no more than three of which 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 holds an early years qualification and is part of an accredited childminding network. She attends the local toddler groups and takes children to the park.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely warm, caring and inclusive environment where the childminder is fully aware of children's individual interests and capabilities. Her very good knowledge of local safeguarding procedures helps protect children along with comprehensive risk assessments which consider all areas used by minded children. The childminder demonstrates a high level of confidence in the Early Years Foundation Stage and supports and helps all children to develop extremely well in their learning. Partnerships with parents and other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are highly effective in successfully promoting children's welfare and learning. Self-evaluation considers the setting's strengths, as well as identified areas for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- updating the regulators contact details held within the complaints policy.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of safeguarding children procedures. She has a thorough awareness of possible symptoms of abuse and has completed e-learning training. Further advanced child protection training is

planned for later this year to ensure that her knowledge is kept up to date. The childminder has compiled a full range of policies and procedures, which accurately reflect the services she provides and are used to inform parents of her duty to protect children. Exemplary systems ensure that all required documentation, records, policies and procedures are securely in place and effectively used for the ongoing support of each individual child. However, a minor oversight from the childminder means the regulator telephone number is not up to date. Robust risk assessments are in place and the childminder shows a dedication to completing these, to ensure all hazards to children are clearly monitored. Resources are well organised and accessible, enabling children to consistently make independent choices about their play and learning from the excellent range available.

The childminder and parents work closely together to create an excellent partnership which contributes significantly to and enhances each child's well-being. The effective two-way flow of information between the childminder and parents both at the outset of care arrangements and as children grow and develop ensures that they are valued as individuals are settled and make good progress. The childminder encourages parents to be fully involved in their child's activities and they contribute significantly to the child's learning journey, often mirroring the activities at home. Parents receive regular newsletters that contain useful information about activities and forthcoming events which helps to keep them well informed. The childminder uses questionnaires effectively to contribute to the rigorous monitoring of her service and to ensure she is responding to the children's and parents' needs. The childminder is proactive in establishing effective working relationships with other settings the children also attend. She has developed effective channels of communication with the local school, in order to share information about the children's learning and development.

The childminder is enthusiastic and has ambitions to further raise the standards of care and learning for all the children in her care. She takes very positive steps to improve by attending training and meetings. She is highly receptive to the advice and guidance given by other professionals, such as the local authority development workers. Consequently, this ensures that children's care and learning is always of a high quality. The childminder has a clear vision of the improvements she wishes to make and is confident and capable to make continuous progression.

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

The childminder's very caring and loving nature helps all children to feel very secure and settled in her care, this has a positive impact on their learning and development. They receive abundant choices in their play and the childminder very skillfully engages with them, encouraging their language skills. For instance, she discusses colour, number and shape continually during play to extend the children's knowledge and understanding. The children take part in an excellent range of purposeful play opportunities, both in and out of doors, which meet their individual needs exceedingly well. Activities follow their interests, build on what they already know and offer them significant challenge. The childminder makes

high quality observations of each child's activities and progress. She uses them very effectively to inform parents of their child's progress and to individually tailor further activities for the next steps in the children's learning and development. This enables children to continually make significant progress and ensures that they achieve as much as they can in relation to their starting points and capabilities. She works with parents to ensure she has all the information and skills which enables her to excellently cater for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Children receive lots of individual attention from the childminder who actively supports their growing independence, encouraging them to do things for themselves, such as visiting the toilet. She devotes her time to the children, effectively promoting learning through play. Children are involved in the local community and socialise with other children as they regularly visit toddler groups and engage in play with other minded children. During their play, the childminder instinctively intervenes when she sees opportunities to extend children's thinking. For example, as children look through a reference book about horses they come across and ask questions about the unicorn. The childminder patiently explains that this is a mythical creature, something they would never find in real life. Spontaneous conversations generated by photographs reflecting activities they have enjoyed are valued, which results in children's interests being encouraged and them developing a strong sense of belonging. The childminder makes use of local resources, such as the toy library to ensure children have access to a very good range of resources and play materials that reflect aspects of diversity, different cultures and disability. Children's natural curiosity is fostered well, as they experience the thrill of releasing butterflies outside after they have carefully nurtured them through their life cycle. A wealth of photographs show the children enjoying dressing-up, building dens, baking, constructing and developing their creative skills. They explore texture and form through a variety of media and at the inspection visit spent a good deal of time exploring the texture and modelling with play dough.

The children enjoy an exceptional variety of outings that help them gain an understanding of the wider world. For example, going to museums which also introduces the children to aspects of history. Children learn to keep themselves safe both in the home and during their outings as the childminder provides consistent and clear explanations. For example, as they carry their chairs to the table, they are reminded to hold them carefully and to walk. Guided by the childminder's healthy eating policy, parents provide children with nutritious packed lunches supplemented with healthy snacks provided by the childminder. Children know all they say and do is fully appreciated and valued by the childminder, due to her constant praise, encouragement and full participation in their activities. As a result, the children are well-mannered and their behaviour is exceptional.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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