

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	27/10/2011
Inspector	Hazel Meadows
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 two children, aged nearly three years and one-year-old, in Metfield village, near Harleston, close to the border of Norfolk and Suffolk. There is one step to access the premises and a downstairs cloakroom is available. All areas of the ground and first floor of the home are registered for childminding. There is a large, enclosed garden at the rear of the property available for outside play. The family has no pets.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years of age at any one time, of whom no more than one may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding three children in the early year's age range who attend part-time. She can also offer care to children aged over five years.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds a relevant early years qualification. She walks or drives children to and from local schools and pre-schools. The childminder takes children to local toddler groups, parks and play areas and to nearby places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in this welcoming and stimulating environment. They are offered a broad variety of play and learning experiences, in the home and on outings, and are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder has a secure understanding of children's individual needs and establishes positive and trusting partnerships with parents. She is developing an effective method of monitoring and assessing children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. All required documentation and procedures are in place to promote children's welfare and safety. The childminder is exploring methods of self-evaluation and has a commitment to ongoing improvement and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review risk assessments as required, and consider what children come into contact with to ensure risks to children continue to be minimised
- develop a systematic method of self-evaluation to highlight strengths and to identify any areas for development or improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are well safeguarded because the childminder has a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and is clear of her role and responsibility to protect children. She has attended relevant training and both she and her husband have Criminal Records Bureau clearance. She has a written safeguarding policy and has a clear safeguarding statement which is shared with parents. She knows what action to take if she had concerns about a child and has local safeguarding contact details. The childminder is watchful of the children and very attentive to their safety. She has written clear risk assessments for her home and for different types of outings which are mostly effective in practice. These will need ongoing review as children grow and become able to reach door handles and other items. All appropriate fire equipment is in place and the childminder has an emergency evacuation procedure, which has been practised with the children. The childminder organises her home, time and resources very well to support children and to meet their varying routines and needs. High quality toys and resources are plentiful and made easily accessible to the children.

Well-organised documentation supports children's welfare. The childminder gathers comprehensive details about the children and has obtained written parental consents to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. Written policies support her childminding and reflect her own setting. The policies, plus copies of her training certificates and other relevant information, are made available to the parents in a well-presented parent information folder and on a display board in the hall. The childminder values children's individuality and has a positive and inclusive attitude to diversity. This is reflected in her policies and in some of the books and resources available.

The childminder develops very positive and trusting partnerships with parents and parent's comments are welcomed. She works closely with parents to settle children gradually to promote smooth and positive transitions into her care. The childminder encourages frequent two-way communication with parents and maintains daily journals which offer an overview of the child's activities and welfare. None of the minded children attend other settings but the childminder is aware of the benefits of developing close links with other settings, to promote children's progress and continuity of care. She is mindful that self-evaluation is an area for ongoing development and is exploring methods of recording this as she gains more experience.

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

Children are relaxed and happy with the childminder and her family and home. She gets to know children very well as individuals and is attentive to them. Children are well occupied and generally well behaved. They respond positively to the childminder's calm and consistent manner. She is skilled at managing behaviour according to children's age, stage of development and understanding. She

effectively uses distraction or a change of activities and much positive praise and encouragement. Children are offered clear explanations and given time to think and respond to any questions or instructions. The childminder recognises the uniqueness of each child and ensures all children are included at their own level. Children are encouraged to consider one another's needs, for example, sharing the toys or waiting their turn for the childminder's attention.

A wealth of age-appropriate toys is readily accessible in low-level storage in the lounge, enabling children to make their own choices and selections. Children eagerly explore the selection, which offers ongoing interest and challenge, such as several action reward toys and puzzles with differing degrees of difficulty. The childminder plays at the children's level to focus their attention and increase their learning and understanding, for example, talking about the shapes or colours they are using. She also gives them time and liberty to discover for themselves, for example, working out a tray puzzle by themselves. The range of toys and resources is supplemented with visits to local toddler groups where children have opportunities to socialise with others and explore a different range of resources.

Children's appreciation of books is encouraged from an early age with an appealing range of books which they enjoy looking through with the childminder. Children have opportunities to explore different media and try creative activities, such as painting and playing with sand or play dough. They concentrate and manage well as they stick different shapes onto paper Halloween pumpkins. Children begin to learn about and appreciate the natural world as they play in the garden or go on outings to local play areas and surrounding countryside. Outings are used by the childminder to help children learn practically about road safety. Children's communication skills are encouraged and supported well. The childminder talks freely with the children, using eye contact, tone of voice and gestures to engage them, and is attentive to their conversations or efforts of communication.

The childminder is developing an effective method of recording children's progress using individual Learning Journey development records for each child. Succinct observations are supported by photographs and are clearly linked to the areas of learning. The childminder notes children's capabilities and next steps and uses this insight to inform future planning and activities. The Learning Journeys are shared regularly with parents who are encouraged to make their own contributions.

Children are becoming familiar with good hygiene practices, such as hand-washing after toileting or using wet wipes before eating and brushing their teeth in the morning. They are offered an excellent variety of nutritious snacks and meals, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Children delight in using an apple corer, with adult support, to cut up their apples into segments. Drinks are offered at regular intervals, ensuring children are well hydrated. Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise which promotes a healthy lifestyle. The spacious and safe home offers children considerable liberty and freedom of movement. They also have regular access to the garden where they develop their skills, coordination and confidence with balls, ride-on toys and larger play equipment. Children's routines are well-maintained and supported in close cooperation with parents. For example, children are able to sleep and rest according to their individual needs.

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	1
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	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	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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