

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/11/2011
Inspector	Carys Millican
Type of setting	Childminder

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her son aged 12 years on the outskirts of Whitehaven, Cumbria. The whole of the ground floor of the property, the first floor bathroom and three bedrooms are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed rear garden available for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children aged under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. Children attend various sessions on a part-time basis. The childminder provides overnight care for no more than two children under 8 years. There are currently 11 children on roll, of whom eight are in the early years age group. The childminder also offers care to children aged over eight years. The childminder walks to school to take and collect children and she has use of a car to transport children on outings. The childminder supports children with English as an additional language. The family have a dog and rabbit.

The childminder holds City and Guilds National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Early Years Care and Education. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally well cared for by a highly motivated, experienced and very thoughtful childminder who's enthusiasm and dedication for her work is commendable. Children feel safe and secure in this fully inclusive, highly stimulating, interesting and welcoming learning environment where their interests are fully catered for through her undivided attention, and the provision of highly innovative resources and activities that ensures that they make excellent progress in their development. The outstanding partnership established with other providers and her excellent engagement with parents and carers contributes greatly to children's care and welfare needs being fully supported and effectively well met. The childminder's meticulous documentation and regular self assessment contributes greatly towards the smooth running of the service she provides and the continuous improvement of this impressive childminding setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop systems to help encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded as the childminder makes sure children's welfare and safety is a priority at all times and in all situations. She demonstrates a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities to protect the children in her care and this is further supported by a meticulously maintained set of policies, procedures and record keeping documents. Children feel safe and secure in this home-from-home environment where they can play in safety knowing the childminder is on hand to support their every need. The childminder ensures children's safety throughout her home and on outings through the completion of extremely comprehensive risk assessments that are regularly reviewed and altered as and when required.

The childminder is truly passionate about her work with children who come from a variety of backgrounds. She ensures that they receive individualised care and an effective play based learning environment which has a flexible approach to allow for spontaneity. Her excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the provision of innovative resources provide children with an astounding range of learning opportunities and activities. The incomparable amount and organisation of resources displayed throughout the home and garden enable children to make excellent choices and decisions in their play. Children are also able to choose alternative toys from a folder containing photographs of all the toys and games stored in other areas of the home. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to learn about the difference and diversity of the world around them. The childminder is deeply committed to providing an inclusive environment where everyone is welcome, valued and respected. Children clearly feel a sense of belonging as they become part of her extended family.

The partnership with parents and others involved in the children's care is outstanding. Parents and carers receive extensive information through policies, procedures, daily sheets, verbal discussion, parent folders and development records. Confidentiality is a priority. Her partnership working with the local Children Centre and other agencies is of the highest standard. All relevant children's documentation is in place and stored securely. Links with other settings the children attend are established to ensure continuity of care and learning. Parents are consulted regularly through discussion and questionnaires about the childminding service to help the childminder continually meet children's individual needs. Children also complete questionnaires with parents to express their opinions on what they like or dislike. Parents are highly complementary about the care that children receive. For example, they state 'she is special in every way and has a natural inherent ability to relate to children and care for their needs well' and 'she is devoted to the children and has excellent empathy with their needs'.

The childminder is highly motivated, enthusiastic, and committed to improving her knowledge of early years practice. She attends a significant number of training courses provided by the local authority and external agencies and is booked onto further courses to update her knowledge. The childminder has excellent systems in place to monitor and evaluate her practice. Regular reflection and self-evaluation

assist in the childminder in continuing to make improvements to an already outstanding service provided for the children and their families.

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

Children feel secure in their surroundings. They are happy and content as they move freely around the home and garden choosing from the fantastic range of toys and resources that promote their learning. The incomparable home-made resources truly stimulate and support children in their learning and development. Children help create these innovative resources with the childminder, who clearly enjoys her work. Children benefit immensely from the uninterrupted time and attention they receive from her. They develop positive attitudes towards their learning as everything they do is based on their interest, therefore the activities are enjoyable and maintain concentration. Planning is flexible and spontaneous events are effectively used to capture children's attention and build on what they already know. The childminder produces informative progress records for parents containing detailed observation and assessment made against the six areas of learning. Achievement is then tracked using the Early Years Foundation Stage development charts. Children's next steps are clearly identified and colour coded to inform future planning and activities. Parents access these documents regularly and they are encouraged to add comments, however there are limited entries recorded. Progress records are also used effectively in shared care situations with other childminders which helps ensure continuity in children's learning and development.

Children enthusiastically join in activities, which cover all their areas of learning and help with their recognised next steps. For example, children count and sort the coloured teddies into plates so their understanding of number is developing very well. They experience many sensory activities, for example, children laugh and giggle as they mix the flour and water to make a sticky mixture in a tray which contains four different coloured teddy shapes. They find them and competently name the four colours. Children thoroughly enjoy being creative and using their imagination. They sit in the 'light box' and read each other stories using puppets and books. The childminder's innovative home-made resources are exceptional. A silver rocket is used as a posting box for tin lids containing pictures of the children who attend the childminders. Children use it to find their picture and name their friends. Children's language and communication skills are excellently reinforced in all activities. They are challenged as they play and their thinking is skilfully extended.

Children play in a fully inclusive environment. Resources and posters reflecting positive images, cultures and disabilities successfully support their increasing understanding of a diverse society. Children also develop a strong sense of their own identity as they begin to recognize similarities and differences in themselves and others. For example, during drawing activities children talk to the childminder about their different hair and eye colour and she explains how some people are different from others. Children become aware of the local area and the community they live in. The childminder takes children on outings to local parks, play facilities

in the area and meets with other childminders so they can socialise with others.

Children are very well behaved. The calm and loving nature of the childminder promotes an excellent role model for children. She is committed to promoting good manners and behaviour in children. Children respond to the childminder with 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting and they show concern and listen with respect to each other as they play together. The childminder constantly praises the children to promote self-esteem and the childminder listens to what children have to say. Children are articulate and gain independence in accessing resources and making choices and decisions in their play.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They can help themselves to their drink when required and the childminder offers them a range of healthy snacks each day. Parents provide midday meals which are appropriately stored till required. Children are aware of hygiene issues, such as, washing their hands before eating and can identify their own 'towels'. Children enjoy playing in the garden with numerous outdoor toys and visit local parks and playgrounds close by. Children's routines are meticulously followed in line with parents' wishes and children are able to rest and relax when they wish. Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe through instruction, for example, road safety awareness and visits to the fire station. Children begin to understand about caring for the environment and sustainability as they recycle paper and plastic, and grow vegetables in pots outside. Children also learn to care for living things. They help feed the rabbit and make bird feeders to hang on the bird feeding station.

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