

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	30/04/2012
Inspector	Sarah Clements
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two older children aged 17 and 19 years in the village of Stanton, close to Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding, with the exception of three bedrooms and the garage. Children share access to the garden for outdoor play activities. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in the early years age group, who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder escorts children to and from a local school. She attends local social groups with the children and takes them on regular outings.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children feel safe and settled in the childminder's care. They benefit from an inclusive environment which offers a sound range of play opportunities to support their steady progress. The childminder is beginning to make better use of observations to track children's progress and identify their individual learning priorities. Opportunities to work in partnership with parents and carers are particularly well established, ensuring important information is readily shared to meet children's needs. The provision is evaluated reasonably well and the childminder demonstrates a general understanding of the setting's strengths and key areas for future improvement. Most of the required documentation is in place to support the safe and efficient management of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- maintain a record of risk assessments, clearly stating when it was carried out, by whom, date of review and any action taken following a review or incident (Documentation) 16/05/2012
- ensure written parental permission is requested, at the time of the child's admission to the provision, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 16/05/2012

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

- develop a stronger culture of reflective practice to identify the setting's strengths and areas for development to improve the quality of provision for all children
- improve the use of observation and assessments developing a systematic approach to identifying the next steps in learning for each child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder implements a relevant range of policies and procedures to ensure children are safeguarded from harm. She has clear understanding of the possible signs of abuse and neglect and understands her duty to refer any concerns to the relevant child protection agencies. Those living in the childminder's household are suitable to be in contact with children because the required checks are completed. Children remain safe and secure in the home, garden and during outings because appropriate visual risk assessments are carried out each day. However, the childminder is not fully meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage as she does not keep a written record of these risk assessments. The suitable use of safety gates ensures that younger children are protected from gaining unsupervised access to the stairs and kitchen. Children access a variety of toys and games that support their play experiences and promote their awareness of a range of ethnic backgrounds, gender roles and disabilities. These are rotated regularly to ensure they continue to capture the children's interest and to offer them sufficient levels of challenge.

The childminder reviews and reflects on her practice, and as a result, she has made some secure improvements to benefit the children in her care. For example, outcomes for children's health are stronger because the childminder has attended a course specifically relating to first aid for babies. Although the childminder is keen to secure further improvement, she has not yet established a regular cycle of self-evaluation. In particular, this means that weaknesses in her documentation are not always identified and addressed as promptly as they could be. For example, written parental permission is not currently requested to allow the childminder to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment for children. The childminder routinely meets with another registered childminder to exchange resources and share activity ideas to widen the children's experiences.

The childminder has a positive approach to promoting inclusive practice and respects each child's unique needs. Although she is not currently caring for any children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, she has a clear understanding of the importance of working with parents and other professionals to provide additional support for children when the need arises. She is also proactive in sourcing training courses that focus on specific needs, such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The partnerships formed with parents and carers are a key strength of the childminder's practice. She strives to offer families a very flexible service which meets their changing needs and supports their individual circumstances. Parents are kept well-informed of their children's

time at the setting, particularly when they are settling in. This is mainly during their daily discussions with the childminder but also through the regularly sharing of meaningful videos and photographs of the children's activities. As a result of this close partnership working, children's needs are well met and they experience good continuity in their routines. The childminder does not currently care for any children who attend other early years provisions. However, she is aware of the importance of sharing information with other settings when appropriate to further support children's continuity of care.

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

The childminder takes time to get to know children when they first join the setting, chatting to parents to gain a clear understanding of their starting points and care routines. From here, the childminder tends to plan retrospectively to ensure children are able to make choices in their play and explore their interests. The childminder's secure knowledge of each child's development enables her to support and extend their individual learning needs through her interactions with them. For example, whilst younger children explore the pop up toys, the childminder encourages them to count as they press each button and to notice the different colours. The childminder is beginning to explore how she can record observational notes of the children's learning, however, she is not yet using her observations systematically enough to fully assess any gaps in children's progress and ensure that activities are truly tailored to children's individual needs.

Children enjoy a suitable range of resources which are set out so they can access them independently and make choices for themselves. For example, they enjoy helping themselves to a range of jigsaws and finding a space to spread the pieces out onto the carpet. The childminder often sits beside the children, offering support to promote their problem solving skills. She gives them time to work out how to put all the shapes back into the jigsaw, prompting them to keep turning the pieces that are more challenging to fit in. Younger children are growing in confidence with their use of speech and language. The childminder repeats their vocalisations, mirrors their movements and shows that she is listening carefully to them to support their early use of key words. The arrangement of books on a low-level shelf enables babies to help themselves to a suitable selection of board books which they enjoy sharing with the childminder. Children demonstrate that they are developing sound skills for the future as they explore various toys which have buttons, switches, sounds and lights. For example, they enjoy pressing the buttons on the small music player to activate familiar songs and show an awareness of technology as they use an imaginary telephone in their play. The childminder plans a sound range of activities and resources to promote children's creativity, including collage work with different materials and finger printing. With the childminder's gentle reassurance younger children begin to grow in confidence with feeling the paint on their fingers. The childminder uses positive methods, such as praise and encouragement, to support the children to gain a sound understanding of appropriate behaviour boundaries.

The welfare of children is promoted at the setting. They are encouraged to adopt

aspects of a healthy lifestyle and develop a positive sense of belonging within the setting. Their individual dietary requirements are respected through the provision of a range of nutritious fresh fruit and vegetable snacks. Children remain well hydrated as they help themselves to their flasks of water and ask for more when they need refilling. There is a sound range of opportunities for children to engage in physical exercise. These include regular outings to local parks, woodland areas and soft play centres where children enjoy climbing, balancing, and throwing and catching balls. Through the childminder's consistent reminders, children learn to keep themselves safe at the setting. For example, they are discouraged from putting the play dough in their mouths and have opportunities to learn how to use kitchen tools safely during cooking activities.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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