

Inspection date

08/12/2014

Previous inspection date

02/02/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children make outstanding progress in their learning because the childminder completes rigorous observations and assessments of them as they play. Their next steps in their learning are clearly identified and extremely well supported through challenging activities that motivate children to learn. As a result, children make rapid progress towards the early learning goals.
- Children are extremely happy within the setting and feel secure because the childminder is exceptionally caring and kind. She works together with the family to ensure that children are settled through a supportive and robust induction procedure. As a result, children have their individual needs competently met.
- The childminder prioritises children's safety and well-being. Risk assessment is thorough and the childminder fully understands her role and responsibilities in protecting children. Consequently, children's safety and well-being are promoted to a very high standard.
- The childminder has forged exceptionally strong links with parents. She shares highly effective information with them relating to children's development and routines to ensure consistency between the minding environment and home.
- The childminder undertakes safeguarding training and seeks advice when needed to ensure children are protected. Her professional development is a high priority as she constantly undertakes training to further her knowledge. This supports continuous developments ensuring a high quality care and learning environment for children.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector made observations of the children while they were engaged in activities and discussed these with the childminder.
- The inspector looked at children's records, observation and assessment files, planning documentation and a selection of policies.
- The inspector spoke to the childminder and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of parent's views, through written documentation they had provided for the inspection and the information from the settings self-evaluation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the childminder's qualification and the suitability of all adults living in the home.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1989 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and four children, three of whom are adults, in a residential area of Alnwick, Northumberland. Children have access to the whole of the ground floor, including a ground floor toilet. There is access to an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The childminder attends a toddler group and activities at the local children's centre. She visits the shops and park on a regular basis. She collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently three children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. She operates all year round from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder receives funding for the provision of early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. She is a member of Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance even further children's excellent literacy skills, for example, by introducing children's name cards for self-registration.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn and develop, enabling her to provide wonderful learning opportunities that allow children to reach their full potential and make outstanding progress. Children are confident and articulate, excited and animated in their play as the childminder joins in enthusiastically, praising and encouraging them. The childminder is highly successful at observing children's development. Through regular, precise assessments, alongside discussions with parents, she has an exceptional understanding of children's learning and development. The childminder uses this knowledge to undertake individual planning with very clear learning objectives for each child. Information about children's achievements and some of the things that they say and do is regularly shared with parents. The childminder also meets with parents during each term to discuss their child's ongoing progress and to add their ideas and views to the planning. Furthermore, they discuss any areas of learning where children may need additional support or challenge and identify where they need to move on next in their learning. Consequently, there is a highly effective and consistent approach to supporting children's progress and well-being.

Children's communication and language skills are given high priority. The childminder provides excellent commentary and asks open-ended questions to engage children in

practising their language skills. For example, she asks 'can you remember who lives in the tree?'. She listens to their responses, giving them time to speak, demonstrating that she values what they have to say. The childminder's clear pronunciation ensures that children hear appropriately modelled language. On the whole, play is child-initiated and children are given the time and space to explore and learn for themselves. However, the childminder skilfully intervenes when it is necessary or beneficial. For example, she snuggles up on the sofa with a child to read a story. She skilfully asks questions that encourage the child to think and form ideas and opinions about how the story will develop or how the characters in the book may be feeling. Using a range of stimulating props, the childminder expertly engages children in a variety of action songs and they eagerly join in, which enhances further their language development. Children's literacy skills are extremely well fostered through a wide variety of high quality books. Boxes of toys are clearly labelled and the environment is rich in print. Children have easy access to a very good number of resources, such as pens, crayons and chalks, along with lots of glitter and glue to make exciting creations. Children are extremely proud of their writing and drawings, and confidently give meaning to their marks. One child has shown an interest in letter formation and the sounds that the letters make. The childminder has incorporated this into the planning by introducing letter and sound of the week. However, there is scope to build on children's interest to support even further their emerging literacy skills.

The childminder is adept at extending or adjusting activities to meet children's individual learning needs and to ensure that no child gets left behind. For example, a parent talked to the childminder about how their child was upset after a family pet had died and the childminder thoughtfully and sensitively introduced a story book that helped them to make sense of what had happened. Children have great fun and enjoy easy access to a variety of musical instruments, such as drums, maracas and castanets. They independently experiment with these and explore the different sounds that they make. In addition, through play with instruments, children develop enhanced hand-to-eye coordination and dexterity in the use of their fingers. Children learn about the local community through regular outings, including visits to the library, parks and Sure Start Centre. The childminder takes full advantage of the facilities in the local area and regular days out further afield are also thoroughly enjoyed, such as visiting the local farm and garden centre where children see and learn about a range of animals. Children develop an understanding of the world as they plant and grow peas and apples, then harvest and eat them. All children thoroughly enjoy and develop their creative skills extremely well, as they benefit from an extensive range of structured crafts, painting and drawing resources, which are readily accessible. These are often based around seasonal activities, world events and different cultural festivals, for example, making Chinese New Year masks, Halloween props and Christmas decorations. The childminder provides children with a wealth of challenging opportunities to develop their physical skills and promote good health. The outdoor play area is exceptionally well resourced and provides excellent opportunities for children to enjoy fresh air, be active and use a range of large and small equipment to develop their skills.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children form extremely secure attachments with the childminder and they are clearly very happy in her care. Children's sense of belonging is nurtured and maintained through a gradual settling-in process where time is spent purposefully to ensure each child's needs, likes and routines are known. Parents share comprehensive information with the childminder, so that she has an exceptionally good awareness of children's individual needs. Consequently, this supports children's emotional well-being and helps them to make a smooth move from home into the childminder's care. Furthermore, the childminder is extremely proactive in making contact with staff at any other settings children attend to find out what they know and the progress each child is making. Consequently, the childminder successfully provides consistent and tailored care for individual children right from the start. This means that everyone involved in children's care and education has a wealth of information at hand, to ensure that all children are emotionally prepared for the next stages in their learning. The environment, both indoors and outdoors, is highly stimulating, and provides exciting and enticing activities that are well organised to enable children to make independent choices about what they want to do.

The childminder organises her time and home carefully to ensure she is able to dedicate herself to meeting children's care routines consistently and to provide high standards of support and supervision. From an early age, children's independence is encouraged and they play an active role in the setting. This results in them being secure in their surroundings and feeling highly confident when making choices. Furthermore, children have excellent opportunities outside the childminder's home to further develop their self-confidence and independence skills. For example, the childminder takes children to play activities, story time sessions at the library and trips to the farm. These opportunities introduce children to group situations whereby they socialise. Children's behaviour and manners are exemplary and they say 'please' and 'thank you' as part of their normal daily routine. They listen to others when they are speaking and are fully aware of the childminder's high expectations for their behaviour. Children's ability to communicate well with other children and adults, behave well and their growing independence means that they are extremely well prepared for their move to nursery or school.

Healthy eating practices are highly promoted as a range of fresh fruit is available for children to access for snack, and lunches which are provided by their parents are balanced and nutritious. This means children are supported to make healthy choices and gain an understanding of healthy eating. Children develop self-care skills as they wash their own hands and faces using their own individual towels. Attractive posters in the bathroom provide children with a constant reminder about the importance of washing their hands. Consequently, excellent hygiene practices are followed to ensure their health needs are fully met. Furthermore, children benefit from lots of opportunities for fresh air and exercise, through access to the childminder's well-resourced garden, woodland walks and visits to the local park. As a result, children develop superb physical skills and habits for healthy living. The childminder places a strong emphasis on the safety of children and effectively supports them to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. This is further compounded by the clear boundaries that are in place within the home. During outings, children learn the importance of road safety as well as frequently participating in emergency evacuation. This means children are developing a very good

awareness of the actions they must take in an emergency.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well safeguarded, with high quality, robust policies and procedures that are shared with parents. The childminder has an excellent understanding of her role and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children's welfare and has recently attended advanced training on the subject securing her knowledge. She is confident in her ability to put children's safety as her paramount concern and clear about the steps to take if she was concerned about a child in her care. All required documentation is meticulously maintained and all adults in the home have been suitably vetted. High quality risk assessments and ongoing safety checks ensure that both the indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as venues for outings, remain safe and risks to children are minimised. The childminder is acutely aware of the importance of evaluating the service she provides and reflects on what she does regularly to assess the impact on children's learning and development. She uses an exceptional range of rich and varied observations and rigorous assessments of children to evidence the excellent progress they are making towards the early learning goals. This combined with the childminder's highly effective tracking tool enables her to accurately analyse and review what she knows about each child's development and learning. She is then well placed to put into place if necessary any interventions to maximise children's full learning potential. This rigorous approach by the childminder strongly contributes to the excellent progress children make in their learning and development.

The childminder has highly successful partnerships with parents and other professionals, which support children's individual needs extremely well. Parents are provided with copies of all policies and procedures, and complete a detailed settling in form when children first start in the setting. This allows the childminder to get to know children very well right from when they first start with her. Parents are invited to termly meetings to discuss their child's activities, development and how the childminder intends to follow up their child's next steps for learning. Parents are actively encouraged to follow up their child's learning at home and their views about their child's care and development are central to the childminder's effective planning and support for their child. Weekly journals are highly effective in exchanging ongoing information about children's welfare, activities and progress. Time is taken at the end of each day to exchange information and texts and phone calls are used when necessary. In addition, notice boards, newsletters and informative leaflets make sure that parents are kept well informed of events, changes and other general information. The childminder's positive links with other agencies and other providers ensure continuity for children. When children are ready to move on to a new setting, the childminder provides the new practitioners with clear and accurate information about children's development. Letters and cards from parents and external agencies express their appreciation for the excellent information that the childminder provides them with and the progress children have made in her care.

The childminder takes exceptional pride in all areas of her work and constantly strives to

improve through a rigorous self-evaluation process and ensures that children and parents are actively involved. She recognises that ongoing evaluation, reflection and training are key to maintaining a high standard, quality provision and keeping abreast of current initiatives. The childminder has recently completed a level 3 childcare qualification, and attended a great deal of training to help her improve her practice and understanding of how children learn and develop. This means that children benefit from continual high quality practice and excel in all areas of their development. The childminder has completed the online self-evaluation form, as well as a focused improvement plan to help her make carefully chosen and considered changes to her practice, for example, supporting children's moves to new settings. To improve this she has devised a simple but very effective booklet that helps prepare children and parents for change, so that they are well equipped to move on to this new phase in their lives, whether this be nursery or school.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	506940
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	869310
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	3
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	02/02/2009
Telephone number	

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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