

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY421145
Inspection date	18/03/2011
Inspector	Julie Neal

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 registered in 2010. She works from the home of her co-childminder, where household members include the co-childminder, her husband and their two children aged ten and 7 years. The property is a farm in the village of Middle Chinnock, near Crewkerne, Somerset. Childcare takes place in a converted building next to the farmhouse. There are large gardens suitable for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Registers. When working alone, she may care for a maximum of six children under eight years, no more than three of which may be in the early years age group. When working with her co-childminder, they may care for a maximum of nine children under eight years, no more than five of which may be in the early years age range. There are currently eight children in the early years age group attending at different times. The childminder is not registered to provide overnight care.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well overall. Good relationships with parents ensures the childminder is well informed regarding individual children's specific requirements, and so is equipped to meet these effectively. She uses her knowledge of individual children well to plan activities that stretch and challenge them, and as a result, children make extremely good progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. The childminder's self-evaluations are effective in enabling her to prioritise areas for development that promote high quality outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review processes of practicing emergency evacuation procedures with children to enable all children to have regular opportunities to take part, in order to develop their awareness of how to act safely in the event of a fire
- develop records of learning and development for children who attend other settings who are the main providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, to show how activities support learning objectives identified by the primary setting

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and as a result children are effectively safeguarded. The childminder has a thorough understanding of issues that may raise safeguarding concerns in respect of individual children, and she is confident in the actions she would take in order to ensure children remain protected. The childminder ensures she keeps her safeguarding knowledge up to date through training, and through sharing good practice with her co-childminder. Written safeguarding policies and procedures are given to parents and overall these are clear and provide appropriate information about how their children will be protected from harm. However, the policy relating to safeguarding allegations being made against the childminder or others in the setting lacks detail, and so does not fully inform parents of the action the childminder would take in these circumstances. The childminder ensures that children are kept safe and secure, and conducts very good risk assessments. The childminder makes extremely good use of the outdoor learning environment, and the thoroughness of her risk assessments and daily health and safety routines ensure that children remain safe. For example, children benefit from the learning opportunities provided through the setting being situated on a working farm, and they immensely enjoy using the exciting adventure playground.

The childminder evaluates her practice well. She recognises that she has benefited from working with an experienced childminder, and that this has contributed towards her very good understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She and her co-childminder regularly review what they do in order to develop action plans that will sustain good quality outcomes for children. Roles and responsibilities are shared very well, with both childminder's acting as key workers to individual children. Feedback from parents is welcomed and taken account of as part of the self-evaluation process, and children's views are included very well in action plans. For example, the childminder has included children's suggestions in plans for developing an outdoor area, such as turning an old trough into a water garden to keep tadpoles. The childminder reviews the learning environment extremely well to ensure resources are easily accessible to children and support their interests and learning objectives. For example, ensuring that babies and very young children have space on the floor away from older children's games, where they can stretch and kick, and to explore toys and materials that have different textures and sounds. The childminder has reviewed and updated all documentation to ensure that agreements with parents and other records relating to children reflect the co-childminding arrangements. Records clearly show when each childminder is present and confirm ratios are met.

The childminder develops good relationships with parents and carers. As a result, information relating to individual children's care and development is shared very well, enabling the childminder to meet each child's needs. For example, babies and very young children benefit from these strong relationships because the childminder is well prepared to support their changing requirements as they grow and develop, and their daily routines change. Some children also attend other

providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as pre-schools and schools. The childminder has developed effective links with these providers to share information relating to children's learning and development.

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

Children's welfare, learning and development is promoted most effectively overall. The childminder's good health and safety procedures ensure that children enjoy a safe and hygienic environment. Children are protected from the risk of illness and cross infection because the childminder ensures parents are informed of her procedures relating to unwell children. Meals and snacks provided by the childminder are healthy and nutritious and take account of children's individual dietary needs. Children enjoy very good outdoor activities that enable them to gain the health benefits of plenty of fresh air and exercise. For example, they immensely enjoy using climbing equipment, rope swings, and the trampoline in the adventure play area, stretching their muscles and learning physical co-ordination. Excellent opportunities to explore the farm and surrounding countryside provide children with daily exercise while they learn about the natural world. Children safely engage in these adventurous activities because, overall, the childminder teaches them very well about how to conduct themselves in order to minimise the risk of harm. Children are safe and secure when indoors, and the childminder has appropriate procedures in place to protect children in the event of a fire or similar emergency. These are practiced with children every term. However, the childminder does not organise these so that all children have the same opportunities to practice how to keep themselves safe in an emergency, for example, if a child is not present on the day a fire drill is scheduled..

Children's learning and development is promoted extremely well, and they make excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their starting points. The effective key working system implemented by the two co-childminder's results in very good observations being made. These are used very well to identify each child's progress towards the early learning goals, and to identify goals for the future. Children's development records are, overall, very good. Children's current stages of development are identified and individualised learning plans show key aims and objectives for each child. However, records for children who attend school, who are still in the early years age range, are less well maintained than those for children in the preschool age group. For example, they do not consistently identify how activities enjoyed with the childminder continue to support their learning.

Children are extremely keen participants in activities that promote their learning. This is because the childminder makes very good use of children's individual interests to extend their learning and development. For example, children who have moved to the rural area from larger towns and cities are fascinated by the farm environment, and the livestock that they see. They look at pictures of animals in books and magazines and identify where these are the same or different to those on the farm, and have animated discussions with the childminder about

these. For instance, they identify cows that are the same colour as those they see on the farm. They enquire why there are pictures of sheep 'with no coats on' and listen attentively while the childminder explains why sheep have to be shorn regularly. Babies and very young children benefit from the childminder's excellent interactions with them that develop their awareness of their world and of themselves. For example, the childminder uses resources such as rattles and mirrored objects to stimulate baby's interests, and to encourage them to reach out for different objects. Children are extremely confident and happy in the setting. They are well behaved and demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and emotional security. For example, babies enjoy plenty of cuddles, they are extremely content because the childminder understands their individual needs and responds very well to these. Older children take pride in being helpful and have chosen to create a rota to help with everyday chores, such as laying the table and drying up plates.

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	2
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	2
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	1
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	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