

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY360675
Inspection date	31/05/2011
Inspector	Alison Reeves

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 2007. She lives with her husband and three children, aged 14, 12 and three years, in Burwell, Cambridgeshire. The ground floor and garden playroom are used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder drives or walks to a local school and pre-schools to take and collect children. She takes children to the park, nature reserves and educational facilities. The family have guinea pigs and fish.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for five children under eight years and of these, two may be in the early years age group. She is currently caring for five early years age range children on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage thrive in this highly effective setting with each individual child valued and respected. Children's needs are met and all are making rapid progress in their learning and development. Partnerships with parents and other providers are successful in promoting high quality care and education. Robust self evaluation and reflective practice ensures that continuous development and improvements are secured.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further the outdoor learning environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded by this accomplished childminder who is very clear about her role in protecting children and ensuring their well-being. She ensures children are not left alone with anyone else and visitors are logged. Highly comprehensive, robust policies are implemented extremely well to ensure children's safety. Meticulous risk assessments are conducted for all areas used by children indoors, in the garden and for all outings to minimise the likelihood of accidents.

The childminder is proactive and committed to ongoing professional development to provide increased opportunities for children's learning, as demonstrated by her

attendance at additional training and her stated intention to continue with this. The setting is very well organised and effectively planned providing a highly stimulating learning environment. The new play area has significantly enhanced the provision for children. They enthusiastically select items for their play from a wealth of easily accessible resources. For example, children explain how they changed the water in the tray by adding some of the paint from their pictures and corn flour. This turned the water a lovely vibrant green and made gloop at the bottom of the shallow tray. Children describe the soft and smooth texture of the gloop as they lift it and let it drop through their fingers. The children use the wild animals in the tray and bring their imagination to the fore. They describe the animals walking through the jungle into the river. This kind of play means children can include many aspects of learning in a single activity and, therefore, they are thriving. The childminder has further plans to provide more inspiring resources to support learning in the rich, varied and imaginative outdoor area.

Self-evaluation is robust and thorough. The childminder continually reflects on her practice. She knows her strengths and areas for development extremely well. Consequently, improvements are highly effective in increasing opportunities for children to learn about and experience the world around them. For example, she developed planting and growing and children are enthusiastic about their burgeoning crops. This enables them to see where their food comes from and be involved in its production. The targets she sets herself helps her to maintain her high standards and provide challenge that brings about improvements in the outcomes for children. For example, by integrating the Montessori education principles and Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, children have a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities and the different methods of teaching enable her to appeal to a wide range of children.

The childminder forms very effective close working relationships with parents. She values family background and seeks detailed information that supports her in understanding children's needs from the outset. Children's routines are followed to ensure continuity of care and there is regular sharing of information to ensure changes in children's needs are understood. The childminder works very closely with children and their families to support ongoing achievements. Parents can contribute to children's learning as they are updated with the newsletters and through the 'Baby Days' system. They supply photographs of their children participating in a variety of events and activities as part of the 'Birthday Walk' celebrations. The childminder has established effective links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage that children attend to ensure both settings work successfully and cohesively. Regular discussions with the child's key person, sharing records of achievement, planning and newsletters enhance all aspects of care and bring about shared goals.

The childminder supports children extremely well. She spends time with them engaging in play and develops critical thinking by asking open questions. Her ability to adapt innovative activities means that all children are challenged and able to participate at an appropriate level. Inclusion and equality of opportunity are prioritised. This means that the individual needs of all children are met and all are included fully in all aspects of the setting.

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

Children feel very safe because of the strong trusting relationships that have been established. They move carefully and safely around the home and understand how this helps them to stay safe and avoid accidents as they play. Children demonstrate their skill in the safe use of tools as they dig in the rubber chippings to find the muddy water below. Children relish the free flow play with lots of outdoor activities throughout the year. They wear suitable clothes to provide protection and warm. Children delight in active games that help them to learn body control, for example, using the large play equipment at the park and sees children enjoying testing their body strength and endurance as they climb. Healthy, nutritious snacks and meals, described by the children as yummy, along with drinks ensure children are well nourished and hydrated. This ensures they have plenty of energy for play from a diet that meets their specific needs. Children understand how to keep themselves healthy and free from germs. They are competent in implementing robust hygiene routines and can explain why this is vital for their own health.

Children enthusiastically engage in lots of interesting worthwhile activities that help them develop a wide range of skills. They thoroughly enjoy using the water tray and various containers to transfer water from one pot to another, drawing attention to the holes in the side explaining how if they keep filling it, the water will pour through to the ground underneath. They demonstrate their understanding capacity and volume as they push their hands, arms and the bowl into the water making the level rise. Children recognise print as having meaning when they point out the labels on the plants. Children are effective communicators using their verbal skills well to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings. Their love of books is seen clearly as they are enthralled by familiar tales, they are using a popular story monster as the basis for lots of imaginative play and exploration in the local woods. Children use a variety of mathematical concepts in play to count items and organise objects according to size. They regularly describe the various characteristics of objects they are using, demonstrating their understanding of shape, texture and weight. Children are frequently engaging with the natural world as they care for their growing plants and feed the birds. They are highly skilled in operating the computer and easily explain how their favourite programmes work. Children are very interested in the natural world and incorporate it in many aspects of their play and learning.

The childminder plans a wide variety of challenging, stimulating activities based around children's interests. She has highly effective systems that support the cycle of observation, assessment and planning to monitor children's ongoing learning and development. She frequently observes children in their play recording each child's achievements with a selection of photographs and samples of work. Children are included in this process as they note their own achievements with the Montessori resources drawing smiley faces to denote success. Consequently, children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They take responsibility for tasks in play and as part of organising their environment. They show respect for others as they listen carefully and consider other peoples feelings. This is because the childminder role models behaviour exceptionally well, gives clear explanations and sets appropriate boundaries. Children are active within their local community and are learning about the wider world through interesting activities using artefacts from around the world that introduce new ideas and promote diversity.

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

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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

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