

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY300991
Inspection date	06/02/2009
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
Type of setting	Childminder

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2005. She lives with her husband and two children aged six and 14 years. Her husband acts as an assistant. They live in a house in a residential area within walking distance of schools and shops in Maldon, Essex. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house and the upstairs bathroom is used for childminding. Access is via one small step into the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time and is currently minding five children in the early years age group. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis and takes children to the local park and library. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. The childminder works well with parents in relation to the children's individual care needs. She ensures that children participate fully in a wide range of activities and is beginning to assess their progress and achievements and how she can plan for further learning. Children play in a secure and generally safe environment and have access to an abundance of play materials. Most of the required paperwork is in place and is reasonably well maintained. However, some records lack all of the necessary details.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that written information required for safe and efficient management is recorded in regard to individual children - this refers to the register and contracts
- ensure that all parents sign the relevant consent agreements
- develop further the system of observation and assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles and match these observations to the expectations of the early learning goals.

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

- ensure that all paperwork is available for inspection by Ofsted - this refers to a first aid certificate (Documentation) 06/03/2009
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children both indoors and outdoors are kept to a 06/03/2009

minimum - this refers to potential hazards on the first floor landing and in the garden. (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare, care and safety are reasonably well promoted. Systems for reviewing the service the childminder provides are developing and she has started to evaluate what she needs to do to improve outcomes for children. The childminder has attended the necessary training and holds the Introduction to Childminding Practice certificate. She attends short training courses to develop her knowledge of how young children learn and both the childminder and her assistant have attended first aid training. However, the childminder is currently unable to find the certificate that confirms that she holds up-to-date knowledge of first aid.

The childminder ensures that children are satisfactorily safeguarded. The child protection policy details the steps she would take if she had concerns about a child's welfare. Since the last inspection the childminder has moved house and now has a designated playroom in her garage. A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the family home is mostly safe. However, children's safety is potentially compromised because they have access to possible hazards in the garden and on the first floor landing.

The childminder builds friendly and helpful relationships with parents. She makes time to share relevant information and discusses some aspects of progress that children have made. Written policies are shared and parents sign clear contracts that detail the business arrangements. However, there is potential for misunderstanding because not all parents have signed the relevant consent agreements and information about the children is not always individually recorded. Parents make very positive comments about the childminder and appreciate the range of fun activities she provides for their children. The childminder has started building links with the nearby pre-school to ensure that there is consistency in the learning experiences offered to children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder has basic knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). She meets with another childminder to plan activities linked to themes and cultural festivals. Learning experiences are interesting and broadly linked to the areas of learning. The childminder plays alongside children and uses age-appropriate methods to teach the children basic literacy, numeracy and communication skills. For example, when children explore play dough they count as they cut out shapes, they roll the dough into the shape of a letter and they talk animatedly about what they are doing when making models. The childminder asks questions to encourage the children to think and give interesting responses. Learning experiences are planned to engage children's curiosity and investigative skills. For example, they thoroughly enjoy searching for treasure hidden in shredded paper.

Children have plenty of opportunities to be creative and play imaginatively. A wide range of art and craft materials are available and children have access to musical instruments, such as a piano. The childminder has built a stage in the playroom so that children can dress-up and act out imagined and real life scenarios. Resources and books reflect positive images of diversity. Information about the children's heritage and various different countries is displayed to promote discussion while children eat at mealtimes. The childminder is in the very early stages of monitoring and assessing children's progress and is reviewing how her observations link to the early learning goals.

Effective fire procedures are in place to keep children safe; smoke detectors are checked regularly and the children practise fire evacuations to ensure they know how to exit the property in an emergency. Children gain effective personal hygiene skills, learning to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They learn about healthy eating and the importance of a healthy lifestyle through discussion, physical activities and nutritious snacks. The childminder is a positive role model and encourages children to be polite and friendly towards each other. Consequently, children are settled and content and are encouraged to develop the skills they need for the future.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection/registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.