

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	118697
Inspection date	31/03/2009
Inspector	Amanda Jane Gray
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 registered in 1988. She lives with her husband and two sons, aged 17 and 22 years. The family live in Rainham, Essex. She works in partnership with her husband who is also a registered childminder. The whole of the property is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. Disabled access is good and there are three toilet facilities situated on the ground and upper floor. The family have a cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children aged under eight years at any one time. With her husband she is registered to care for eight children under eight years. She is currently minding four children under five, four children between five to eight years and four children over the age of eight years on a part-time basis. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA) and is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding. Children's needs throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are exceptionally met well because the childminder takes account of their individuality, welfare and effectively helps them progress in their learning and development. She promotes inclusive practice with all the children by finding out about their unique characters and valuing their similarities and differences.

The childminder demonstrates an extremely positive attitude and has the capacity to maintain a high level of continuous improvement within her provision, by consolidating her knowledge and understanding of childcare issues and implementing her policies and procedures to ensure the smooth running of the provision. She has plans to attend additional training in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop observational methods for young children
- update the written complaints policy so that it includes the requirement that complainants are notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective leadership and management means that all of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are exceptionally well met. Written records, policies and procedures are of an exceptional quality, well organised and are kept up to

date to ensure that all children are safe and have their individual needs catered for on a continual basis. A comprehensive complaints procedure is in place and this is shared with parents, however, it is yet to reflect recent legislation requiring that complainants are notified of the outcome of an investigation within 28 days. The childminder ensures that she keeps her training up to date, attending courses, such as Food Safety, EYFS overview and by studying for the NVQ level 3 in childcare and education. This helps her to improve and ensure children are safe and continue to receive a high level of care.

Formal risk assessments are highly effective in helping the childminder to identify and eliminate any risks to children. Children further benefit from the childminders proactive approach to outings as both herself and the co-minder pre-visit any unfamiliar venues prior to taking children to assess their suitability in terms of safety. Safeguarding procedures are shared with parents and the childminder continually updates her knowledge to ensure she is able to protect the welfare of children. All required checks on household members have been successfully completed ensuring children's safety. Effective procedures are in place to ensure children stay healthy and the childminder is able to care for children appropriately if they become ill or have an accident. The childminder organises time, space and resources proficiently to provide children with extremely engaging and highly stimulating play and learning opportunities which help them make exceptional progress.

The childminder has created clear and helpful systems of communication with parents which keep them well informed about their child's progress and helps them to be involved, which parents have positively commented on. She is proactive in establishing excellent working relationships with parents to plan for children's progression and support their development, especially when caring for children with specific needs. And provides parents with a private room in her home where they can sit and discuss their concerns, child's progress or agree strategies to manage behaviour. Parents receive detailed information on their child's achievements and development. This is achieved through daily written journals, photographs, verbal communication and files containing children's work.

The childminder continually reflects on her practices to enable her to positively make improvements to her childminding service. She has spent considerable time in developing her policies and procedures which she shares with parents whom sign to acknowledge they have read them. This ensures they are fully aware of her service and that children are cared for in line with parental wishes. The childminder encourages parents and carers to share information about their children's abilities and interests. This enables her to plan a range of activities and opportunities both within and away from the childminding setting. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the level of service that they receive and have placed their extremely flattering comments in writing. For example; 'They hold the childminder in high regard for the warmth, integrity, and emotional security that their child experiences from being in the close, loving family atmosphere' and 'The childminder has supported children with any behavioural issues, and on each occasion has sat down and discussed the best course of action and carried it out in unison'.

The childminder has been highly successful in improving since her last inspection by attending on-going training and developing opportunities for children to take part in creative play. This effectively meets the learning and development needs of young children and continues to enhance the already outstanding service offered to children and their parents.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The childminder has a wealth of knowledge and understanding about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and is highly aware of the ways in which children learn through play. She gathers useful information about children at the beginning of each placement through discussions with parents and a flexible settling-in process ensures children grow in confidence and security. This allows her to provide activities which build on and extend children's learning. The childminder is highly motivated and enthusiastic and has implemented systems for observing and assessing children through various media such as examples of their work, photographs, and notes. She is continuing to build observational techniques on via ideas from her current NVQ training. She is able to identify children's next steps in learning as she has an in-depth knowledge of each child's individuality and ability and uses this information for future planning which she shares with parents.

A clear knowledge of the welfare requirements ensures children are kept healthy and learn the importance of good hygiene such as washing their hands before their meals and the childminder takes an interest in food safety, actively pursuing training to ensure she keeps up to date with current legislation and food handling techniques. Menus and refreshments are planned on a four week rota which cover all special dietary needs and nutritional requirements. As a result children benefit from a highly nutritious and balanced diet.

The childminder is committed to making sure each and every child has a fun time in her setting, with lots of dancing, music and singing, helping to create a happy atmosphere. Children are encouraged to be confident and develop their self-esteem. As work is encouraged to be taken home and displayed. Children further benefit from topics where self esteem and confidence is looked at through adult led discussions and activities. For example children participate in activities that promote the following: My body is amazing; what makes me unique; I'm fantastic; what's my talent; I'm I introvert or extrovert; what's my personality.

The childminder offers a very good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which result in children being creative and thinking critically. Children are stimulated by first hand experiences. This captivates their interest and provides them with wonderful opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills. For example, children enjoy frequent walks out with the childminder. They participate in swimming lessons, horse riding, tree climbing, indoor sports such as pool and bowling, adventure parks, have picnic's in the woods, and attend nearby parks.

Children develop a fantastic awareness of the wider world and diversity through celebration of different festivals and positive images in their toys and resources. The childminder is skilled in recognising children's uniqueness and fosters their

desire to learn about other cultures and religions. For example; She sponsors 4 children as part of world vision in India and Africa and children are encouraged to become involved in correspondence with them. In addition children and the childminder have been talking about comic relief and the importance of providing mosquito nets. To help children understand this concept she has erected a mosquito net in the play room on the children's cot for the children to experience first hand. Disability awareness is given high priority and visual aids promote positive images for young children. More able children have been exploring sports people with artificial limbs and artists who have disabilities, such as painters who use their feet. Children have been experiencing this first hand and have enjoyed being creative using their own feet to paint and draw.

The dedicated play area has been set up extremely well to provide an enabling environment for all children. It is warm and welcoming, bright and child-orientated with easy access to the play resources and activities. This encourages children to make free and independent choices in their play. For example, books and appropriate toys are easily accessible to younger children on a daily basis.

Children are very polite and cooperative. They willingly take turns and follow simple instructions. They are extremely happy and settled in the childminder's care as she provides a child centred, welcoming environment in which children can play, learn and relax. Children generally behave well; they receive lots of praise for their achievements which helps to build their confidence and self-esteem. In addition, children are supported to gain an understanding of acceptable behaviour. This is because the childminder is consistent and gives clear and age-appropriate explanations for unwanted behaviour.

Through fun and exciting daily routines children are learning the things they need in order to help them progress through their education, the social and communication skills, how to problem solve and use numbers in everyday situations and the use of information technology. These skills enable children to contribute effectively to their future economic well-being.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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.

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.