

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY229457
Inspection date	01/06/2009
Inspector	Lynn Clements
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 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 2002. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, three of whom may be in the early years age group. An exception to this condition is made for a short period of time to allow the childminder to care for four children in the early years age group. The childminder is also registered to care for children on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder lives with her two children and their pet dog and fish. They live in a residential area of Little Dunmow.

Access to the setting is on one level and there is a downstairs toilet available, helping to promote an inclusive environment. The whole of the house, managed by the childminder, is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder is an accredited member of the National Childminding Association.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The needs of all children are met extremely well and the uniqueness of each child is recognised, this ensures that they are supported so that no group or individual is disadvantaged. Children are supported by the childminder to make very good progress in their learning and development. Clear systems are in place to ensure that children's welfare is protected and promoted with regard to child protection and safeguarding children from hazards; however, the current risk assessments are limited. Open partnerships with parents, carers and others, in the wider context are used to promote continuity of care for the children. In addition, the childminder has introduced effective systems to evaluate her practice in order to promote continuous improvement, including addressing the recommendation raised at her last inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the current systems of assessment to ensure that children's next steps for learning are clearly identified and that planning is linked to the six early learning goals
- re-appraise risk assessments to ensure they clearly identify hazards and how these are minimised.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is exceptionally well-organised. She draws on her own experience and shares good practice ideas through childminding network groups and by working closely with a development officer from the National Childminding Association. Since the last inspection the childminder has completed her accreditation, enabling her to provide care and learning opportunities for children in receipt of early years funding. In addition, she now engages in self-evaluation, listening to parents and children, analysing her practice and identifying strengths and areas for improvement, this enables the childminder to continually improve and build on good practice, providing children with extremely good learning and development opportunities. At the last inspection, the childminder agreed to develop her resources to include natural objects for the children to explore. She has implemented treasure baskets enabling children to explore and develop their ideas and understanding about objects, such as pine cones and sponges, but also providing opportunities for them to learn about recycling, helping them to develop positive attitudes for the future.

Attention has been paid to developing clear policies and procedures which are shared with parents and carers and implemented in practice, in order to provide positive outcomes for the children and promote the smooth daily management of her setting. All required documentation is in place and regularly updated to meet legislative requirements and children's changing needs. The childminder has paid particular attention to her professional development, completing relevant training, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which supports her practice and ultimately the children who attend. All paperwork is securely stored and confidentiality is respected. Partnership with parents and carers is excellent. Time is taken to complete daily journals, providing talking points for parents and carers about their child's day; it also provides opportunities for them to share observations of their children's achievements at home, enabling the childminder to learn about and provide future experiences based on the whole child. In addition to these, scrap books and development matters booklets are completed using the EYFS, again sharing these with parents and carers and working with other settings the children may attend, for example pre-school, to provide a cohesive approach to each child's care and learning. There is no bias in the childminder's practice in relation to gender, race or disability.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are confident and happy in the childminder's care. They make their own choices, about the games they want to play from the very good child-height storage. Opportunities for self-expression and independent investigation enables children to learn at their own pace in an environment which is free from fear of failure. In addition, adult-led learning provides a balanced approach to each child's development. The childminder has a clear understanding about child development and how they learn best through fun, play-based learning opportunities and activities. She takes time to observe, assess and plan future learning to ensure that children are making very good progress towards the six early learning goals. Clear

observations are made, both written and photographic and development matters booklets are used to plot progress over time. The individual scrap books are compiled detailing observations of what each child knows and can do. However, children's next steps in learning are not always clearly identified. Planning is in place and takes account of a wide range of topics and learning opportunities to spark children's imagination. However, specific activities and learning opportunities are not consistently linked to the six areas of learning in order that continued progress can be assured.

Children thoroughly enjoy using their imagination, creating pretend meals or becoming princesses and princes travelling through the garden. They observe what happens around them, supported by the childminder who shows an interest in what they are doing or seeing, for example, all take time to observe and wave to aeroplanes as they fly over the garden, with the childminder extending thinking and listening skills as they talk about where the plane may be going. Children explore battery operated toys, helping to develop their growing awareness about technology, such as using a toy blender in the role-play kitchen, watching as it spins around when they put the lid on and press the button. The childminder is vigilant about safety and ensures that children have plenty of excellent opportunities about learning to keep themselves safe, this is done through play, discussion and good role modelling by the childminder, for example, talking about moving safely within the setting or whilst out and about and learning how to use utensils safely. In addition, trips further afield, such as to the local fire and police station help to bring discussions, such as fire safety and stranger danger to life and provides further opportunities for children to learn about the wider world. Children learn to share and care for each other, taking time to include each other in games or when sharing wheeled toys, such as bikes and buggies. Behaviour is extremely good and children are supported sensitively by the childminder who takes time to help them further develop their growing ideas about right and wrong or good manners.

Children's welfare is of paramount importance to the childminder. She has excellent systems in place to protect children from harm, including daily checks of all child accessible areas, organising her home to minimise risks and completing risk assessments regularly. However, whilst risk assessments are in place, there is a minor weakness with some in relation to the details included. First aid and safeguarding children training has been completed enabling the childminder to provide appropriate care and support in the event of an accident or concern about a child's welfare. Children have access to healthy food and drink and parents and carers fully support the childminder's healthy eating approach, when providing packed lunches. The childminder has completed food hygiene training and implements effective procedures in practice which ensure that risks to children from the storage or preparation of food are minimal. Children develop their understanding about personal hygiene, washing their hands at pertinent times and learning about protecting themselves from germs. Children have access to drinking water at all times and this is monitored by the childminder to ensure that every child is properly hydrated. The childminder has undertaken training to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and whilst she currently has no children with specific needs on roll, she has previous experiences and clear

strategies to support both children and their families. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

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?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
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?	2
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?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
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?	2

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

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