

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	504254
Inspection date	30/11/2009
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
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 1998. She lives with her husband and three children aged 10, 14 and 18. They live in a house in a residential area in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. All areas of the childminder's house are used for childminding. Access is via one low 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 six children at any one time and is currently minding one child in the early years age group. The childminder is registered to offer overnight care to two children. The childminder drives or walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has no pets.

The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder runs a local carer and toddler group and meets with another childminder on a regular basis. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and an approved childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is well organised and committed to creating the best possible outcomes for children. A very clean, safe and welcoming family environment is provided. The childminder recognises children's individuality and ensures every child enjoys a range of experiences that generally build on their existing knowledge and help develop new skills. The policies and procedures underpin the safe and efficient management of the setting and ensure children's physical and emotional security. The childminder is dedicated and professional and continually improves her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) by attending relevant training courses.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the systematic and routine approach to using observations to plan the next steps in learning
- develop further the written policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect the provision for overnight care.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected because the childminder has attended a range of safeguarding training courses and she demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of associated issues. A full risk assessment of the premises is conducted at regular intervals and the childminder also assesses the risks to children on a variety of outings. The childminder effectively carries out checks on a daily basis to ensure all potential hazards in her home are reduced. She is very vigilant about children's security, ensuring that all visitors are closely monitored and their identity documents are scrutinised. A wide range of written policies and procedures are shared with parents about the childminder's practice. However, the policies do not yet include information in relation to the provision of overnight care.

The childminder organises her daily routine effectively and ensures that children receive plenty of attention and support. She is continually monitoring her provision and invites feedback from children and parents to extend her scope for improvement. The childminder seeks advice from her network development worker and is working towards accreditation. Her many strengths are recorded in her self-evaluation, areas for further development are recognised and plans for the future effectively ensure that outcomes for children continuously improve. The childminder has a committed approach to including all children, taking into account their differing needs. Activities are adapted to ensure all children can contribute; they then feel welcomed and valued. There are positive images around the home which reflect diversity, with resources in place which children readily access everyday. Therefore, children develop a better understanding of their world around them. The childminder has experience of working with professionals that support children's development such as speech therapist or physiotherapists. She has developed links with local schools to assist children's transitions into full-time education and understands the benefits of liaising with key workers in pre-schools to enhance continuity in children's care and learning.

Children benefit greatly from the excellent partnership with parents and carers. Children's individual needs and requirements are discussed carefully and in detail with parents prior to placement and on an ongoing basis as they develop new skills and achieve milestones in their development. Home visits are also completed for children before they attend the setting, giving children the opportunity to meet the childminder in their own family environment. Parents and carers have access to extremely good quality information on what the childminder has to offer. A wealth of additional information relating to children's health and education is displayed or presented in a basket in the entrance hall. Parents become involved in children's learning by contributing cultural artefacts and items such as saris or Diwali lamps after returning from their holidays. Parents are extremely pleased with the service they receive from the childminder and appreciate her professional attitude and the careful balance of play and education she provides.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves as they engage in purposeful play experiences that link to all areas of learning within the EYFS. The designated play room is equipped with a stimulating variety of resources and additional toys are stored in the cabin in the garden. Play materials are stored at a level where children can easily select their toys and take decisions about their play. Child-sized furniture is provided so that children can eat and play in comfort and safety. Photographs and examples of the children's activities are displayed for everyone's appreciation.

Sensitive settling in procedures and liaison with parents ensure that children new to the setting are content and that the childminder has good knowledge of their care and welfare needs. Observational assessment is being developed for the children who have only recently joined the setting and progress charts are ready for use. The childminder gathers information from parents from the outset about children's interests and capabilities so that their starting points are easily identifiable. The childminder is aware that further development of a systematic and routine approach to using observations to plan the next steps in learning will enable her to consistently plan meaningful, challenging activities that ensure children make as much progress as they can.

Every opportunity is used to promote children's communication, language and literacy skills. Imaginative strategies for keeping children enthralled while sharing books and telling stories are used. For example, props and laminated cards are used to bring books such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears' to life and children enjoy recalling the story and anticipating what comes next. Outings are also used to enhance children's learning. Good use is made of nearby parks to promote physical development and the children develop their knowledge of the natural world while investigating what they find on the beach or when they go pond dipping.

Children's health and safety is of paramount importance and the childminder has a very good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. The childminder helps children to develop an excellent understanding of hygiene routines and safety customs. Hand washing routines are well established and the children have colour-coded cups, bowls and plates for individual use. Healthy eating is promoted and supported by parents. The childminder is extremely knowledgeable about the children's medical needs or special dietary requirements and regularly attends anaphylaxis training as well as first aid courses. Children regularly practise the fire drill and learn about road safety as they wear high visibility jackets and hold hands on the walking bus to or from school each day. The childminder ensures children are fully protected by carrying their contact details on outings and making sure that contingency arrangements are in place in the event of an emergency.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	1

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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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