

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY330637
Inspection date	23/11/2009
Inspector	Moira Oliver
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 2006. She lives with her family in a village near Halstead, Essex. The whole of the downstairs of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The setting can be easily accessed by one small step at the front door. The family has a dog, four chickens and two gerbils as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and she is currently minding nine children, four of whom are in the early years age group. She also offers care to older children and is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to a local school and pre-school to take and collect children. She takes children to local parks, a parent and carer toddler group and the shops. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and is approved as an accredited member of the North Essex Braintree District Children Come First Childminding Network. She is in receipt of funding for three- and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The quality care and education provided enables all children to progress well through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have fun in the stimulating environment and their welfare is well catered for. The childminder understands the value of working closely with parents and other settings and good relationships are built. She strives to improve her practice through accessing further training and using self-evaluation to monitor her provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for parents and others across different settings to share what they know about the child and become involved in identifying the next steps in their learning and development
- ensure self-evaluation clearly identifies specific areas for future improvements in practice, and the impact on outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good understanding of her role in safeguarding children and is confident to put procedures into practice where necessary to protect children from abuse and neglect. She ensures her home is safe and secure and children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and unauthorised persons cannot gain

access. Children are supervised at all times and thorough risk assessments are carried out on all areas used and the equipment. Risk assessments are also in place for outings and the childminder ensures she has a range of items with her at all times. For example, she has a mobile phone with all the children's contact numbers in as well as a hard copy of them and always carries first aid items.

The childminder is well qualified and has a wealth of experience in childcare. She keeps up-to-date with developments through attending training and workshops and working closely with her childminding network. The childminder is dedicated to her role and is proactive in her approach to knowledge, using nursery educational magazines and information from her training. She regularly reflects on her provision, for example, evaluating the activities and topics she provides. However, self-evaluation is general and is not specific about the areas for development and how they will impact on improving outcomes for children.

Well-organised documentation and detailed records ensure that she can provide high levels of care and education for each child and work in partnership with parents. Parents are extremely happy with the provision and state that the childminder provides a happy family environment and is totally committed to her work and the well-being of each child. They have access to their children's developmental records and also to a range of photographs displayed in scrap books to provide valuable information about what the children do and enjoy. However, at present parents do not contribute to their child's records. The childminder has very good relationships with the school and pre-school and has had opportunities to look at the records they keep on the children. However, she has not got systems in place to share the information she keeps to support their progression and provide continuity of care.

The childminder has a very good knowledge of each child's background and needs. She supports the children to understand and learn about diversity and the society they live in. For example, using resources such as books, discussions and celebrating festivals, increasing children's awareness of their own and other cultures.

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

Children are extremely confident, happy and have fun in the rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. They have built strong relationships with the childminder and settle well. They are listened to, treated with respect and the childminder is genuinely interested in them and their lives. She provides a balance of planned and child initiated play experiences and keeps valuable records of children's achievement. Observation and assessment is used effectively to identify priorities in the children's learning and development and the childminder plans motivating and exciting activities for all children.

Children become independent as they manage their shoes, coats and personal care, such as, hand washing. They move around the areas freely, accessing the toys and equipment and help to put them away afterwards. They enjoy socialising

with other children as they meet at the toddler and childminding groups. The childminder plays a significant role in the children's speech development. For example, she chats to them about what they are doing, asks relevant open-ended questions to encourage their thinking and introduces them to new words, increasing their vocabulary. Older children are beginning to write letter shapes and some can manage their names.

They enjoy counting and take every opportunity, for example, they count the slices of cucumber in their packed lunches. Children compare size and shape and discuss their ages, working out who is older. They have lots of opportunities to explore nature as they look under logs for insects and look for spider's webs on the way to school. They learn how to care for animals as they feed the gerbils and the chickens and children notice when the water is low and ask to top it up. They enjoy splashing in a large puddle after the rain and have many opportunities to climb and balance as they use large play equipment when they visit the local park. Children express themselves through music as they sing along to nursery and action rhymes. They are creative and explore the paint on their hands as they make hand prints.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they take part in topics about road safety. For example, they visit the school crossing patrol officer and make their own lollipops out of paper plates to use in their play. They understand the importance of holding hands on the roads and that they could be hurt by the cars. They learn to keep themselves healthy as they take part in topics about healthy eating, they grow vegetables such as runner beans and are encouraged to try a range of different tastes. Clear policies and procedures ensure that children are cared for appropriately when they are ill or have an accident and they have a good understanding of hygiene routines. For example, hand washing after handling animals or the animal's food. The childminder uses effective strategies to support children to manage their own behaviour and they learn to be kind to others, to share and to take turns.

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	2

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	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	2
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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