

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	07/05/2010
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 2009. She lives with her husband and three children aged 10, seven and four years. They live in a house in a residential area in Chelmsford, Essex. All areas of the childminder's house are used for childminding. Access is via one low step into the house. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder also acts as an assistant when she works from another childminder's home.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of four children at any one time and is currently minding one child in the early years age group. The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. The family has a hamster and keep tropical fish in an aquarium as pets.

The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The 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.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's learning is well supported through an interesting range of activities. The childminder understands the importance of partnerships with all those involved in each child's care to ensure that their individual needs are met. The necessary documentation is in place and policy details are clearly linked to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that all children are safeguarded and their good health and well-being is generally well promoted. The childminder uses informal self-evaluation methods to inform and develop her practice. She attends relevant training courses to update her knowledge and skills and promote continuous improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- carry out regular evacuation drills and record details in a fire log of any problems encountered and how they were resolved
- review and revise risk assessments of the premises and outings to include anything with which a child comes into contact
- develop further self-evaluation and reflective practice to identify the strengths and priorities for further improvement
- encourage parents to contribute their observations to the children's

developmental records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a sound awareness of her responsibility towards safeguarding children from abuse and neglect and understands how to take the appropriate steps in the event of any concerns. She informs parents of her obligations and has all relevant contact details to hand. All adults in the family are vetted and there are effective contingency plans in place for children's care that have been discussed with their parents. Most documentation is well organised with an accurately maintained register and a system in place to record medication and accidents. The childminder has undertaken risk assessments to ensure that most potential hazards are minimised. She is vigilant about the security of the children and keeps a record of all visitors. However, children may not be fully protected because they have access to potential risks such as cleaning products in the bathroom, and insufficient attention is given to assessing the different venues that children attend while on outings. Although the childminder regularly checks her smoke alarms, she has not yet practised an evacuation procedure so that the children know how to swiftly and safely exit the premises in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has a suitable policy regarding equality of opportunity. She gathers information about the children's background and needs and ensures that they have access to play materials that reflect positive images of diversity, so that they feel good about themselves and learn to respect others. Activities, outings and special events are also used to widen children's knowledge of the wider world and other languages.

The childminder is keen to develop her professional knowledge and expertise. She has a clear training plan which helps her to understand the Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines. The childminder discusses best practice with other childminders and reads childcare literature to help further develop her provision. Activities are reviewed so that they enhance children's development, however, the childminder has not yet undertaken a full evaluation of her childcare provision to widen the areas for development and maximise improvements.

Parents and carers are welcomed into the childminder's home during introductory visits before children start to attend. Information about the children's care and well-being is regularly shared. Parents receive useful details about the childminder's policies and procedures and important information is displayed on the notice board. Parents' suggestions and comments are valued and respected which promotes continuity of care for each child. However, parents have not yet become fully involved in their children's learning by contributing their observations to the development records. The childminder is building links with the local pre-school and fully understands the importance of effective partnerships with all those involved in children's welfare and learning so that children receive complementary care.

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

Children are actively engaged in a well-balanced programme of adult-led and child-initiated play. Learning experiences build on what children already know and can do and the childminder successfully supports their knowledge and skills across all six of the areas of learning. Information from observations is utilised well to identify each child's learning interests and next steps and informs the long-term activity plans. Resources and play materials are regularly rotated and clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children have well-presented learning diaries that include positive comments about achievements and progress, supported by photographs of their experiences.

Children are happy in the childminder's care and are active, curious and inquisitive learners. The childminder extends children's learning and develops their language and vocabulary as they talk about their different experiences. Children's interests and enthusiasms are used particularly well to extend their learning. For example, when children play with the train set they name and count the different engines; they sort and discuss their colours and can recognise the numerals they see. Children benefit from many interesting outings to local childcare groups and the library which extends their learning experiences and helps them to socialise with others. Visits are also made to nearby parks and an outdoor adventure centre so that children can develop their physical skills or make investigations on a nature trail. Bus rides into the town centre also help promote children's learning as they animatedly chat about what they see and find out about the local community.

Children behave well because the childminder has effective strategies to ensure that they remember right from wrong and act responsibly. The childminder is a calm role model. She ensures that children observe important social skills such as good table manners or saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Children are beginning to show an understanding about healthy lifestyles. They learn about basic hygiene routines and enjoy washing their hands with liquid soap and use individual towels. They can have drinks at any time to quench their thirst and are encouraged to taste new food such as a variety of fresh fruit. Children are starting to understand about their own personal safety as they practise road safety procedures on the way to and from pre-school or school and show a sense of security within the premises. 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

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
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

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

Met