

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	560007
Inspection date	11/02/2010
Inspector	Sarah Johnson
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 1990. She lives in the village of Doddinghurst in Brentwood, Essex. The whole of the childminder's home, with the exception of the bedrooms on the first floor, is used for childminding. A secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The childminder has a pet rabbit.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of whom may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. Three of these children are within the early years age range. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder walks to local pre-schools and schools to take and collect children. She attends local social groups with the children and takes them on regular outings in the local area. The childminder is working towards a relevant early years qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment in which children's individual needs are well met. Secure relationships are fostered with parents to ensure that children experience good continuity in their care. Most of the required documentation is in place to promote children's welfare. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning and are offered appropriate additional support tailored to their individual developmental needs. The childminder has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of her early years provision and takes effective steps to improve her existing practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- request written parental permission, at the time of the child's admission to the provision, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future. (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 01/03/2010

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

- open up further opportunities for parents to have free access to their

children's developmental records, and ensure their comments, and those of other Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) providers, are incorporated into the records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted by the experienced and caring childminder. They are kept safe from abuse and neglect because the childminder has good understanding of her responsibilities in safeguarding children from harm, and has attended an appropriate safeguarding children training course. All the required checks are completed to ensure the childminder and other adults who have regular contact with the children are suitable to do so. In addition to this, thorough risk assessments are carried out in the home and garden to minimise any potential risks to the children's safety, and these are recorded and reviewed regularly. Most of the required documentation is in place and well maintained to ensure the provision runs smoothly each day. However, the childminder has not requested the required written parental permission from some parents to ensure she can readily seek any necessary medical advice or treatment for all children in an emergency.

Emphasis is placed on day-to-day sharing of information through meaningful discussions with parents and carers. Parents, both past and present, speak very highly of the care their children receive and many families choose to stay in touch when their children grow older and leave to join school. Each child benefits from good continuity in their care. This is because the childminder gathers information from parents about children's starting points and home routines during settling-in sessions. Parents find out about their children's ongoing progress through accessing their children's developmental records on a reasonably regular basis, however, as yet the childminder has not fully explored how she can encourage parents to contribute to these records. Similarly, the childminder is not yet incorporating any of the information she gathers during her discussions with practitioners that care for children in other EYFS settings.

Children benefit as the childminder strives for good practice and regularly monitors and evaluates the quality and standards at the setting. She links up with a local playgroup practitioner for advice when using the Ofsted self-evaluation form to reflect on the strengths of her setting. Since the last inspection the childminder has fully addressed the recommendation made, resulting in a clear procedure for following up any complaints. The childminder promotes equality of opportunity to ensure each child is supported to participate in all aspects of the provision and achieve as well as they can regardless of their background. Children's understanding of diversity is well promoted. For example, they develop a positive awareness of disability as they learn to communicate through basic sign language and use realistic crutches in their role play situations.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development as the childminder understands how they learn and develop through their play, and offers an interesting range of resources for children to choose from each day. Through regular observations, the childminder gets to know children's interests, skills and abilities, and identifies future learning priorities for individual children. She keeps a developmental record for each child, including several examples of the children's work and a checklist detailing their individual progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are confident in making their own choices. For example, some children show an interest in practising their hopping skills across the lounge, whilst others are attracted to the paints, paper and paintbrushes set out on the table. They are happy playing alongside each other as they design farmyard scenes with small world characters, negotiating where to position the various pieces of fence to keep the animals inside. The childminder sits close by and steps in sensitively to ask questions that extend children's thinking. For example, she prompts children to count the number of animals they have in the farmyard, and consolidates children's awareness of different colours. Children show a particularly strong interest in sharing stories with others. They readily choose books from the wide selection available, sitting closely beside the childminder as they refer to the pictures to help them to retell the familiar story. The childminder ensures that younger children are also included as she invites them to sit on her lap. She prompts them to point to characters in the pictures and pauses regularly to encourage them to 'read' the next word. There are several photographs and displays of the children's art work displayed within the home, making for a bright and inviting play space where children feel that their contributions are celebrated. Opportunities for children to practise their early mark-making skills are promoted. For example, the childminder extends children's ability to control tools by showing them how to create circular movements with the paintbrush. Children are beginning to appreciate the importance of respecting the needs of others. The childminder actively praises their positive behaviour when they help to tidy the books away, and she steps in calmly to diffuse any disagreements between children who are learning to share and take turns. Good use is made of various groups and places of interest in the local community, which adds variety to the children's experiences. For example, they enjoy visits to the local toddler group, where they develop their social skills alongside others and encounter a wider range of additional resources.

The childminder has a very good understanding of how to maintain a safe environment for children. An effective range of safety measures are in place, including a safety gate which is installed appropriately to prevent children's unsupervised access to the stairs. Children relax comfortably and safely in the lounge, ensuring they are always closely monitored and feel secure. The childminder makes the most of real-life situations to teach children how to stay safe. For example, children learn the route they should take if they need to leave the house in the event of a fire, and are carefully reminded of the danger of falling

off when they stand on the chair. Healthy eating is promoted through the provision of a well-balanced range of snacks and the childminder is mindful to meet children's individual dietary needs and any allergies. Children are protected from the risk of spread of infection, as the childminder provides them with hygienic bathroom facilities and routines, and ensures they are reminded of the importance of hand washing in their daily routine. Younger children who are learning to manage their own toileting routines experience sound levels of support and encouragement.

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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	3
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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