

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/12/2010
Inspector	Sandra Daniels
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 2001. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, four of whom may be in the early years age group. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is currently caring for a total of five children aged between two and seven years, some on a part-time basis.

She lives with her husband and one adult son. They live in a residential area of Harlow, Essex. The whole of the premises, managed by the childminder, is registered for minding and is accessed by a flight of steps. There is no dedicated outdoor play area but the childminder makes very good use of local parks and outside play areas.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is committed to providing the very best care for children. Her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage is very good and, as a result, she plans a good range of stimulating and purposeful activities based on children's interests and abilities. Children are making very good progress because the childminder uses observations to assess their progress and to identify their next steps in learning. The childminder shares valuable information with parents daily to support their children's learning. She reflects on her practice and formally uses a self-evaluation system to identify her strengths and weaknesses.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure children's records of progress clearly show the stage of development they are at in relation to the stepping stones of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are kept extremely safe in this setting where the childminder is vigilant at all times and places a high priority on safeguarding issues. All adults in the household are suitably vetted and these checks are kept on file. The childminder has attended training in safeguarding children and is fully conversant with the correct procedures to follow should she have any concerns. A comprehensive

safeguarding policy is in place, reflecting that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken to manage or eliminate potential risks on the premises and on outings to ensure that children remain as safe as possible.

The childminder has high aspirations for the quality of her provision and, since her last inspection, great improvements have been made, resulting in better outcomes for children. This is a fully inclusive environment where every child is valued for their uniqueness. The childminder is committed to developing her childcare knowledge and skills and has attended many relevant training courses. She reflects on her practice and uses feedback from children and parents to inform her self-evaluation. All recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Children of different ages are all equally included in the setting; their uniqueness clearly recognised by the childminder. Resources reflect diversity and are used effectively and are easily and safely accessed by children.

The childminder is highly experienced and provides a well-organised and effective learning environment for all children in her care. Warm and trusting relationships are developed and children are clearly happy, comfortable and feel safe and secure with the childminder. Children's welfare is enhanced by policies and procedures which are unique to this setting and implemented consistently well. The childminder works effectively with parents, enabling a two-way flow of information in order to ensure she can meet each child's needs. Parents can see their child's 'learning journey' books at any time and are welcome to communicate verbally, in writing or via text message. Established partnerships with other professionals and agencies ensure continuity of care for children and help them through times of transition, for example, when they start pre-school or school.

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

Children are highly motivated in this setting where they can easily and safely access what they want to play with, learning to make choices and decisions for themselves. This supports the development of children's self-confidence and self-esteem. Interaction between children and the childminder is fully supportive and inclusive. Children are used to having their contributions to conversations recognised and valued, encouraging them to share their feelings and express their ideas and wishes. Similarly, children know their artwork is valued because the childminder displays it proudly around the home. Children take pride in remembering to be kind and thoughtful, for example, asking 'Shall I play this quietly?' when they know younger children are asleep. They behave very well because they are interested in the opportunities and experiences on offer.

The childminder has a very good understanding of child development and the six areas of learning. This means that children's learning and development in all areas are promoted, whether they are taking part in a planned activity or simply chatting to the childminder on their walks out. Opportunities are taken on outings to help children to develop a sense of how to keep themselves safe. They look forward to seeing 'Lollypop Deb', who helps them to cross the road safely. Indoors, they know

which of the Christmas decorations are safe to touch or play with and which they should just look at and talk about. Each child has their own, personalised 'learning journey' book, brimming with photographs depicting their progress and achievements. The childminder skilfully links these observations to the areas of learning and accurately indicates what the children have learned and what their next steps in learning will be. The childminder is mostly aware of each child's development through the six areas of learning. However, she does not always identify what stage the children are at. This means that opportunities to challenge children's learning are occasionally missed.

Information is gathered from parents at the start of each child's placement with the childminder. This, together with some initial observations as the child settles into her care, provides an accurate picture of what children can already do and what they already know and provides the basis for the detailed written plans completed diligently by the childminder. Children begin to listen with enjoyment to stories as they visit the library and design the front cover for a book they each make with their own story. They find out about features in the community as they visit the post office and talk about what happens to letters when they are dropped into the post box. By counting the number of chocolates left on the advent calendar, children begin to work out how many days are left to Christmas and indicates that they are active, inquisitive learners. Children learn about similarities and differences as they explore their feelings through role play and stories and talk about happy and sad faces. As a consequence of the childminder's care and support, all children are making significant progress towards the early learning goals.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and meals and regular drinks provided by the childminder. They learn about keeping themselves healthy as they proudly inform the childminder 'I've flushed the toilet and washed my hands'. After going to the bathroom. Children also develop a positive approach to being active in the outdoors. They benefit from regular walks out, visits to farms, the beach and local parks where they can develop their strength and skills using the large equipment.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	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	1
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

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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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	1

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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