

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	08/03/2011
Inspector	Liz Grocott
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 1992 and lives with her husband in the Witham area of Essex. The premises are within easy reach of public transport, shops, parks, schools and community resources. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the rear of the property. Contingency plans are in place to call on another registered childminder in the event of an emergency or sickness.

The childminder is registered to care for six children under eight years at any one time, and is currently minding five children on a part time basis of whom four are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are taken to and collected from local schools and preschools. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is supported by the local authority early years team. The family have a dog.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and child-centred environment which promotes their welfare. They make good progress in their learning and development as the childminder provides numerous opportunities for them. She is enthusiastic in her role and this is reflected in the care and learning she provides. Children are interested in their learning and the balance of activities and resources provided allows them autonomy in their play. The childminder has started to reflect on her practise but has as yet, to identify areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the safeguarding policy to ensure it is in line with Local Safeguarding Children's Board local guidance and procedures
- ensure medicines are not usually administered unless they have been prescribed for that child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist
- improve risk assessments to include all hazards in the home with particular reference to the cords on the vertical blinds and trailing wires
- provide opportunities for children to learn to respect and value all people and learn to avoid misapprehensions and negative attitudes towards others
- work together with other practitioners and parents to support transition, both between settings and between setting and school
- develop reflective practice and self-evaluation to continually look for ways to improve the quality of the learning, development and care offered that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as the childminder has a clear understanding of possible indicators of abuse or neglect and what she should do should concerns arise. However, her procedure does not have clear information and current telephone numbers are not available. The childminder is also not entirely clear of the correct procedure to follow should she need to report an allegation about herself or family member. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they practise evacuating the childminders home regularly. They are further protected as the smoke alarms are tested weekly and a fire blanket is available in the kitchen. Although a full risk assessment has been recorded, trailing wires and vertical blind cords still pose a hazard to children. All outings the childminder makes with children are assessed for risks before they are made further protecting children.

The childminder has made some improvements since her last inspection. She has filled in the pond in the garden to reduce the hazard to children. She has devised an emergency procedure for evacuating the premises and made sure that parents are aware of her daily routines and activities she undertakes with children. This is a way of keeping parents informed and involved in their child's learning. The childminder was also recommended to improve the provision of resources and activities depicting diversity in society. Children do celebrate some festivals, such as Chinese New Year and have limited resources reflecting differences in skin tone but children's understanding about differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, special educational needs and disabilities are not well provided for. This remains an area for development. The childminder has briefly reflected on her current practice, but has not identified areas for development.

Parents are provided with written information giving them an underpinning knowledge of how the provision operates. They are asked to provide information which will allow the childminder to provide individual care for their children. Daily diaries keep them informed about their child's day and the 'learning journals' give them an insight of how their child is developing in the learning. Parents are pleased with the service they receive. They comment on the childminder's flexibility, her reliability and the care she shows the children. Some children attend other early years settings. As yet effective partnerships have not been forged with other providers to establish continuity in learning for the children.

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

Children are happy, settled and actively involved, because the childminder focuses her attention on the children throughout the day and is sensitive to their individual personalities. The childminder has a sound understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage. She makes regular observations and assessments of children's learning and uses these to plan the next steps in their learning. Children

demonstrate a good bond with the childminder. They happily help themselves to resources and feel comfortable asking for others that may be out of their reach. For example, some dried pasta to use as candles in the play dough birthday cakes they are baking. Children's physical skills are developed by using scissors to cut dough during play. The childminder extends play by asking if the children can roll out the dough to stretch it to make it longer. Lengthy discussions are held promoting language development. The childminder cleverly brings number, problem solving, colour and shape into the imaginative play. For example, the child is having difficulty fitting the baking tray into the play oven. The adult asks if it is turned a different way will it fit?

Letter recognition is developed as craft activities include making a present for one child's grandparent. The childminder continually sings and recites songs and rhymes with the children, helping their understanding of simple subtraction. For instance, 'Five fat sausages' and 'Ten in the bed and the little one said...' Children regularly attend local groups where they socialise with others and have access to other activities for example, mixing coloured paints to make different colours, and using recycled household waste to make stringed instruments. The childminder uses the local area as a resource with walks to feed the ducks, swans and squirrels and collecting leaves and twigs to make collages. Children particularly enjoy imaginative role play, often acting out stories from favourite television characters, such as, a favourite fireman.

Books are readily available to share with the childminder and all children have access to mark making resources promoting their early writing skills.

The childminder promotes healthy lifestyles encouraging children to have plenty of drinks during the day to keep them hydrated. While the garden provides daily opportunities for outdoor play in the fresh air, the childminder also makes use of the large 'green' near the house for a range of supervised activities including picnics. Children's health is positively promoted as the childminder's sickness policy prevents children who are contagious from attending. However, the medicine policy does not make it clear that the childminder will not normally give non-prescribed medication. The childminder has high expectations for the children and has boundaries in place helping them to learn right from wrong. Consequently children behave well.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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