

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/09/2011
Inspector	June 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 1989. She lives in a house in the village of Long Melford near Sudbury with her husband and two adult sons. The whole of the ground floor and part of the first floor is used for childminding. There is a secure, enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, no more than three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for 14 children, all who attend on a part-time basis. The childminder regularly works with an assistant. She also offers care to children over five years to 10 years old. The childminder offers overnight care to one child under eight years old and is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and pre-school and makes use of the local parks, toddler groups and the library. The family have fish in an aquarium and stick insects in a tank. The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and collects nursery funding for three- and four-year-old children. The childminder is a member of The National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has an excellent understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, all children are exceptionally well cared for and make very rapid progress in their learning and development. The childminder has organised her home and garden to make it a highly effective learning environment for children. A robust range of policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children's safety and welfare is very well promoted. The childminder recognises that partnerships with parents and other agencies are vital to children's development and these are mostly first class and well established. The childminder has established superb systems to evaluate her practice and make improvements based on reflection of herself and appraisal by users of her service to benefit the children in her care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensuring links with other providers that children attend are more effective in order to provide for children's continuity of learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to protect children. She is vigilant and has attended safeguarding training. This ensures that she is up-to-date with all present procedures should she have concerns about a child in her care. The childminder completes thorough risk assessments to ensure hazards are minimised in the setting and for all outings. Children's health, safety and well-being are further enhanced by consistent implementation and review of policies, procedures and required documentation.

The childminder has excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children in their learning. The well-resourced indoor and outdoor environment is welcoming, stimulating and interesting to enable children to select their own resources. This helps them to become independent learners and enables children to make outstanding progress in their development. The childminder uses community resources, such as, the library, children's centres and toddler groups to extend learning.

The childminder has very effective processes in place to evaluate her practice and continually looks for ways to improve her provision for children by recording evaluations of activities and their impact. For example, after observing children picking up the pebbles from her front garden, she created with children's input, a pebble garden in the back garden that the children can walk over and collect them. She regularly attends training to update her knowledge and holds a level 3 qualification.

Excellent communication systems with parents have been established, such as, a detailed settling-in process, daily diaries, newsletters, regular questionnaires and progress updates. This means that the childminder knows individual children exceptionally well, is able to meet their needs most effectively and involve parents in their children's learning. The childminder works very well with other providers that children also attend. For example, the childminder and nursery school share learning journals, although, the relationship is not as developed or established with the pre-school. The childminder has worked with the early years teacher and childminding network coordinator to support and promote children's learning. As a result, all children's learning, development and welfare needs are very successfully promoted.

The childminder promotes equality and diversity exceptionally well and activities are adapted to enable all children to participate. The childminder has been trained in Makaton to enable her to communicate fully with all children. She offers children a wide range of resources to fully support inclusion and how they learn about the wider world and local community. For example, there are displays and resources in the setting showing lots of different people and families, such as, small world figures, books and jigsaws.

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

Children are very happy and settled at this setting as exceptional and respectful relationships with a caring and responsive childminder have been built. This ensures that children are very confident and enthusiastic to select activities for themselves and ask for those they want. Children are able to move around the setting freely and safely because the childminder has ensured the environment is safe. For example, children know how to handle tools safely, such as using scissors with the play dough. The children understand about being safe when out of the setting. For example, they know they need to walk on the yellow lines when there is no path outside.

The childminder promotes good health in a highly effective way. Children are encouraged to become independent in their personal routines, such as hand washing before meals, from an early age. They have the opportunity to brush teeth after meals with their own easily accessible toothbrushes and have joined a national dental health campaign. This ensures children know about healthy practices. Children know what foods are healthy as they choose fruit and crackers with a drink for their morning snack. Children play in the garden or outside on a daily basis to promote their physical skills. For example, using the local park to enable them to run around and understand that being active is good for them.

Children make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder's excellent knowledge of the different stages of development and the specific needs of the children, enables her to plan a range of stimulating and interesting activities. Individual learning journeys for all children contain samples of work and photographs show children participating in a wide variety of activities. For example, children going on a windy walk, making pictures, taking part in the big toddle and pretend play. Observations are clearly linked to the areas of learning and the early learning goals. Parents are encouraged to add their comments to learning journals and agree the next steps to ensure parents involvement in their children's learning. Children with additional needs are very well supported, as the childminder is aware of individual needs. She has devised and added resources, such as number cards and measuring rulers, in the small world and construction areas to encourage children.

Children are developing excellent skills for the future, as they are encouraged to help around the setting. For example, children select their own place mats and cutlery for lunch. Excellent language skills are promoted, as children are asked open ended questions and learn listening skills, as they engage in using sound resources, such as rain makers and thunder makers. They enjoy mark making activities, such as water brushing to promote early writing skills and learn about information and communication technology, as they use computers and electronic toys. Children's mathematical skills are developing very well as they use language, such as 'more' and 'less' when having lunch and when counting in everyday activities, such as playing with the play food. Children learn about the wider world by using the library and toddler groups and by engaging in initiatives, such as sponsored walks and the local produce show.

Children behave exceptionally well in the setting because the childminder has clear and consistent boundaries. This ensures children feel settled, confident and motivated to explore the setting and engage in the wide range of purposeful activities and experiences offered. Children receive consistent praise to show they are valued. They show good respect for each other and play very well together, sharing resources, such as the play food. Children are learning about their own and others cultures and beliefs using a good variety of books, puzzles and by celebrating festivals.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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