

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY256994
Inspection date	11/10/2011
Inspector	Anne Sheldon
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 2003. She lives with her husband and three children, aged four, fifteen and seventeen years, in a residential area of Chelmsford, Essex. The childminder's husband is registered as her assistant and sometimes works with her. The whole of the ground floor of the premises is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of five children at any one time. She is currently caring for six children under eight on a part-time basis. The childminder also provides care for children over eight years of age after school. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school and attends the local parent and toddler groups. The family has a pet dog.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder has a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and generally promotes children's learning, development well. Children are making good progress towards achieving their Early Learning Goals, although formal system are not in place to observe and assess children. They are safe and secure and settled in the childminder's home environment. Children's welfare is generally well promoted although some measures taken to prevent the spread of infection are not sufficiently rigorous. Partnership with parents and carers, local schools and the local Children's Centre are good. The childminder is clear about her strengths and areas for development and has a clear plan for the areas of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the sensitive observational assessments in order to identify learning priorities for children and to plan to meet the children's individual needs
- ensure that children's health is promoted and that steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection. This particularly refers to hand washing prior to meals
- enhance arrangements for children who are ill or infectious, with particular reference to the exclusion period.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a sound understanding of her responsibilities in terms of safeguarding children which is supported by well written policies. This information

is shared with parents. The appropriate checks with regard to suitability have been carried out on all adult family members ensuring children are safe. Comprehensive daily checks and risk assessments of the premises, equipment and outings are carried out and regularly reviewed. As a result, any potential risks are minimised enabling children to move about the home environment freely, safe from hazards.

The homely environment is bright airy and provides a spacious learning space for children both in and outdoors. A good range of well-maintained resources support children's learning. The childminder's knowledge of the Early Learning Goals is good and she uses it well when thinking about next steps for children when planning for the children's days with her. As a result children are making good progress. An effective equal opportunities policy is in place and is supported by recent diversity training the childminder has attended. An effective equal opportunities policy is in place and is supported by recent diversity training the childminder has attended.

The childminder is passionate about her work with children. She regularly evaluates her practices and plans improvements. She has addressed all the recommendations set in her previous inspection showing her capacity to make improvement. She is appropriately qualified and regularly updates her training. Good use is made from learning through sessions at the local Children's Centre. Best practice is shared with other local childminders who have formed their own network, which is implemented by the childminder in her home.

She works well with parents and carers, providing useful information for them when their children first start. Daily diaries give brief but useful detail of what the children have been doing during the day and daily routines. Monthly plans of general activities are shared with parents in advance so that they know what their children will be doing and can be involved in their learning. Generally, necessary records are maintained and all parental consent is in place. Parents comment positively about the childminder. They say she is 'professional, welcoming and caring' and that 'all our expectations of her service have been met.'

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

Children are happy, confident and settled in this warm, caring environment. They learn about staying safe as they play, through gentle reminders. Good manners are encouraged and children behave well as they know what is expected of them and are familiar with the age-appropriate boundaries. Independence is fostered as children are encouraged to do things for themselves and there are good opportunities for children to make choices throughout the day.

Children's health and well-being is generally promoted but effective steps are not taken to prevent the spread of infection through hand washing prior to meals. Arrangements for the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious are not clear. However, children enjoy a variety of healthy snacks provided by the childminder, including fruit and vegetables and they are encouraged to try new tastes. They access fresh drinking water through the day to ensure they remain hydrated.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy fresh air on walks to and from school, when playing in the safe outdoor area and on frequent trips and outings. They have regular appropriate opportunities to move to music, dance and take part in interesting and challenging physical activities in the local parks.

The childminder knows each child in her care well and recognises changes as they occur and the children develop. She plans for their next steps based on her knowledge. She does not currently have a system for observing and recording children's progress. However, the activities that are planned for the children are appropriate for their developmental stage and as result children are making good progress in all six learning areas. Children are enthusiastic about learning and relish the praise they receive for their efforts. They are developing good concentration skills and will persevere at tasks. Communication, language and literacy are well-supported throughout the day. Children benefit from quiet story reading sessions and enjoy choosing the books to read. They are encouraged to join in with the reading fostering a love of story time. Language development is given high priority with encouragement being given to the development of speech and vocabulary. There are letters and words in the environment to promote letter recognition. Good opportunities are planned for children to learn to count through singing number songs and rhymes and counting objects in the environment. Children have access to a wide range of creative activities including sensory experiences such as feeling shiny paper and scrunching it. Painting, drawing and sticking activities are offered regularly, as are music making and dressing up. Children also have good opportunities to learn about the world around them as they enjoy visits and outings to the fire station, local parks and zoos.

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	2
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

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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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