

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY278545
Inspection date	23/11/2011
Inspector	Patricia Champion
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 2004. She lives with her husband and child aged eight years. They live in a house in a residential area in Benfleet, Essex. The childminder is registered to work with two assistants. All areas of the childminder's house are registered for childminding. Access is via one low step leading to the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family keep rabbits as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding six children in the early years age group on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder drives or walks to local pre-schools and schools to take and collect children. She attends the local carer and toddler groups on a regular basis. The childminder is accredited to take funding for early education and is currently in receipt of funding for nursery education for one four-year-old.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well cared for by a highly effective, experienced and competent childminder who successfully recognises each child's uniqueness. Exceptionally strong and professional partnerships with parents and other early years providers are fostered and information is fully shared. Extremely effective procedures are implemented to keep children safe and secure. All necessary records and documents are accurately maintained, with the majority systematically organised. Rigorous reflective practice and self-evaluation ensures sustained improvements. This has an extremely positive impact on the children and demonstrates the childminder's excellent ongoing capability for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- collating the development records consistently to produce a more systematic picture of children's progress from their starting points.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's security and safety is rigorously monitored. The childminder's comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues, along with regular training, ensures that children are safe and secure. All adults likely to be in contact with the children undergo the relevant background checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. Extremely clear policies, procedures and collaborative working with parents ensures that children are safe at all times. Risk assessments completed for all aspects of the premises and any outings ensure potential risks to children are identified and promptly minimised. The security of the premises is given a very high profile as the childminder has secure entry systems with a sound and vision monitor. The play space is very well equipped, with an excellent range of safe and high quality furniture and play materials, and the children benefit from independent access to a rich outdoor learning environment.

The uniqueness of each and every child and their family is highly valued. The childminder effectively promotes equality and inclusion across all aspects of her provision. Consequently, all children develop quickly in relation to their starting points. The childminder takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships with other early years professionals. She meets regularly with other childminders to share ideas and good practice, and meetings are arranged with key persons at local pre-schools to discuss children's progress and share observations.

Reflective practice is constant and exceedingly effective. The recommendation from the last inspection has been successfully addressed. Self-evaluation is frequently reviewed and parents and children are able to participate and make their views known. This ensures that high standards are adhered to. The childminder is enthusiastic and highly motivated to attend courses and development workshops or to complete online training. Since the last inspection, she has achieved a level 3 childcare qualification and has become accredited to receive funding for early education.

There are excellent systems in place to develop effective partnerships with parents. The youngest children have their own communication diary which gives parents a very good insight into their child's time with the childminder. There is an easily accessible website, as well as noticeboards and regular email communication. The parents view the development records at frequent intervals and are encouraged to make comments with their observations of children's achievements. Questionnaires are regularly distributed to gain the views and suggestions of parents and children. Parents make extremely positive comments about the childminder. They really appreciate her professionalism, flexibility and reliability and say that their children's progress has come on in 'leaps and bounds' since they started.

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

Children benefit greatly from the childminder's very comfortable and vibrant play environment and they enjoy extremely well-planned activities, with many opportunities for child-led learning experiences. They are given close, individual attention and adult communication is weighted towards listening and open-ended questioning that extends children's thinking. The childminder is respectful of the children and treats them with warmth and kindness, with clear boundaries identifying what is and what is not appropriate behaviour. As a result, children are very polite, listen carefully to the childminder's instructions and behave very well.

The youngest children settle well and develop confidence by first watching and then becoming enthralled and actively involved in the learning experiences. Children learn about the wider world through taking part in themed activities linked to cultural festivals and traditional events and by using resources in everyday play that are representative of diversity. They take part in charity events and create posters and then bake and decorate cakes and biscuits to raise funds for charity. Recognising numerals, counting, calculating and using mathematical language are integrated into everyday routines and play experiences. The childminder fully exploits community venues, such as local parks, toddler groups and children's centres, to provide an extended range of learning opportunities for children. These visits significantly enhance their knowledge and understanding of the natural world and provide additional physical challenges and social experiences.

Children's individual learning is exceptionally well planned for. The childminder ensures that the educational programmes are designed to reflect the unique child and provide interesting challenges to help all children progress towards the early learning goals. Progress is monitored through a variety of methods of observation and assessments to identify possible next steps in learning. The observations are supported by a wealth of photographs and examples of creative work and mark making in individual folders. Achievements are meticulously tracked to ensure that there are no gaps in learning and children are reaching their full potential. However, some of the information in the development folders is not consistently collated to produce a systematic picture of children's progress from their starting points.

Children's overall health is promoted through well-practised routines that become good habits, and following activities from the 'Change 4 life' programme. Meals provided for children are very healthy and varied and children are encouraged to taste new foods. For example, they have mango with other fresh fruit at snack time. Nappy changing is hygienically and sensitively undertaken and the childminder is routinely inspected by an environmental health officer. Children are constantly taught how to keep themselves safe when they wear high visibility jackets as they learn how to cross roads safely on outings and regularly practise emergency evacuations. Exciting trips to meet the emergency services at the local fire and police stations enhances children's understanding of potential dangers without making them fearful.

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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