

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	06/03/2012
Inspector	Hazel Meadows
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 2011. She lives with her husband and three children, aged seven years, four years and two years, in a house in Felixstowe, Suffolk. There is one step to access the premises and the bathroom is upstairs. With the exception of the master bedroom, the whole of the home is registered for childminding activities. Children predominantly play in the dedicated playroom and have use of the other rooms as required. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family has two pet dogs and a guinea pig.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of one child under eight years of age at any one time, of whom no more than one may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding two children in the early year's age range, who attend part-time. She also offers care to children aged over five years. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and holds a relevant early years qualification. She walks children to and from local schools and pre-schools, attends a local toddler groups. She takes children to local parks and play areas and to nearby places of interest.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in this welcoming, safe and stimulating environment. They are offered a broad variety of play and learning experiences, both in the home and on outings, and are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder values children's individuality and maintains very positive and trusting partnerships with parents. She is establishing a method of monitoring and promoting children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. All required documentation and procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare and safety. The childminder has a commitment to ongoing improvement and is considering methods of self-evaluation to improve her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- utilise the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to support and enhance children's learning and development and help promote their progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage
- establish a method of self-evaluation to highlight strengths and to identify any areas for improvement or further development, for example, greater use of outdoor play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and is clear of her role and responsibility to protect children. She has attended relevant training and both she and her husband have Criminal Records Bureau clearance. She has a thorough written safeguarding policy and knows what action to take if she had concerns about a child. The childminder is attentive to child safety and has thoroughly and effectively risk assessed her home to minimise hazards, enabling children to play freely. Risk assessments are also completed for different types of outings. An evacuation procedure has been practised with the children, to ensure it operates effectively and that children are familiar with the process without being fearful.

The childminder organises her home, time and resources well to support children and to meet their varying routines and needs. A wealth of good quality toys and resources are easily accessible to the children in the dedicated playroom. She has all the necessary equipment to support her care of the children such as a high chair and stair gates. The childminder recognises and values children's individuality and has a positive and inclusive attitude to diversity. This is reflected in her practice and policies and in some of the books and resources available. All documentation is well-organised and clearly written policies support her childminding and reflect her own setting. She has designed a very well-written prospectus plus an informative leaflet regarding health and safety. These are both offered to parents and give a clear outline of her practice. She gathers comprehensive details about the children and has obtained written parental consents to ensure children are cared for according to their parent's wishes.

The childminder develops positive and trusting partnerships with parents and welcomes their comments and feedback. She promotes frequent two-way communication with parents, verbally and through daily diaries, to ensure children's individual needs are met and to promote children's welfare. She establishes links with other settings the children attend, via the daily diary, to promote continuity of children's care, learning and development. The childminder has a commitment to ongoing development and high quality. She regularly reflects on her practice and has made some improvements since registration but has not yet established a method of systematic self-evaluation.

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

Children are relaxed and at ease with the childminder, her family and in her home. Toddlers are very secure with her and look for her if she goes out of the room. She gets to know children well and is attentive to their individual needs and personalities. Children respond well to her calm and gentle manner and are very comfortable with her. She manages the children's behaviour well, according to

their age and understanding, using positive praise, distraction and explanation as appropriate. An extensive range of clean, good quality toys and resources, suitable to the ages and stages of children present, offers a good level of ongoing challenge and interest. Toys are stored in clear boxes on low level shelving, enabling children to make their own selections. The childminder regularly encourages children to clear some items to make space for others, which also helps re-focus their attention and play purposefully. Child-sized furniture helps the children play comfortably and independently. The range of toys and activities is supplemented with visits to local groups where children have opportunities to socialise with others and explore a different range of resources.

The childminder recognises the importance of children learning through play and first hand experiences. She plays alongside the children, using opportunities to extend their thinking, learning and vocabulary as they arise. Toddlers delight in playing with action reward toys, working out how to produce music and sounds. They enthusiastically investigate the resources available, busily emptying boxes to explore the contents. They explore different media such as play dough and paint and enjoy creative activities such as cookery, helping to mix the ingredients. Children have access to a plentiful and appealing selection of books. Toddlers snuggle up with the childminder to share a 'flip-flap' book and are engaged well as the childminder encourages their participation. The childminder ensures all children are included, for example, cuddling a toddler on her lap with one book as she reads another book to older children. Children's imaginative play is promoted through props such as dolls and small world toys. The childminder is attentive to children's efforts of communication, verbal and otherwise, and gives them time to think and respond to any questions or instructions.

The childminder establishes children's starting points and capabilities through discussions with parents plus her own observations. She uses her good knowledge of child development to support her care of the children. She is aware of the six areas of learning and offers activities covering all of them. However, she is not familiar with the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and does not refer to it to support and enhance her practice with children's learning and development and to promote their progress towards the early learning goals. She is establishing a method of recording each child's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage using individual 'Learning Journey' booklets. Succinct observations are supported by photographs and linked to the areas of learning. The childminder uses her observations plus children's interests and developing capabilities to informally plan future activities.

Children have regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise on the walk to and from school, which promotes a healthy lifestyle. Outings are used by the childminder to help children learn about road safety. Toddlers are very active indoors, at toddler groups and in the childminder's home, however, use of the garden is limited during the winter months. Children are becoming familiar with good hygiene practices through regular routines, such as hand washing or using wet flannels before eating and after messy activities. They are offered nutritious snacks and meals which include a broad variety of fresh fruit and vegetables. Drinks are offered at regular intervals ensuring children are well hydrated. Children's routines are well-maintained and supported in close cooperation with

parents. For example, children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs, with fresh bed linen for each child.

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	3
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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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	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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