

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/03/2012
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two children aged 14 and nine years. They live in a house in a residential area in Hockley, Essex. All areas of the childminder's house are registered for childminding. Access is via four steps leading down to the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has hamsters, rats and a dog as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently three children attending who are within the early years age range, all of whom attend 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 walks or drives to local schools and pre-schools to take and collect children. She is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder effectively meets and plans for the individual needs of the children in her care. Children strongly benefit from the safe and secure environment that the childminder creates. They thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and they make successful progress in almost every aspect of their learning. The childminder establishes positive relationships with parents and other early years professionals involved in the care of children. The childminder has good organisational skills and her processes of evaluation, although not fully embedded, lead to continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend reflective practice and self-evaluation to clearly identify specific areas for development to enhance outcomes for children
- use observations more consistently to analyse and track children's progress and share the development records more frequently with parents.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the essential documentation that promotes children's safety and welfare is systematically organised and stored confidentially. The arrangements for the protection of children are robust and the childminder has a clear understanding of

her safeguarding responsibilities. There are secure policies and procedures in place and all adult members of the household have been suitably vetted. The childminder places high importance on the safety of children. Clear assessments of risk are carried out for the premises and when children go on outings. This ensures that children enjoy a safe environment in which to play. They are encouraged to be aware of their own safety and the safety of others. For example, they routinely practise evacuation procedures so that they can swiftly exit the premises in an emergency and they are closely supervised and wear high visibility identification bracelets on outings.

The childminder builds very positive relationships with parents. Parents are kept well informed through a comprehensive information folder containing written policies, procedures and leaflets. Important certificates are displayed in the entrance hall. Clear contracts and consent agreements are signed to ensure that parents are fully notified about the care and business arrangements. The childminder exchanges information about children's well-being and interests through frequent discussion or a daily diary. However the two-way flow of information is not fully established as parents are not frequently viewing or contributing to the development records. Parents are very appreciative of the care given and say that they are impressed by the way the children settle and compliment the childminder on her 'kind, calm and caring nature'. Positive links with the other early years settings that children attend bring about a shared approach to children's care, learning and development.

The childminder demonstrates a clear commitment to her continuous improvement. She acts on advice given by her early years advisor and has regular discussions with another childminder to share best practice and gain new ideas. The childminder has attended all the mandatory training and she has completed an accurate self-evaluation that details the strengths of her provision. However, reflective practice and self-evaluation is not yet fully embedded to clearly identify specific areas for development to enhance outcomes for children.

The childminder's practice is inclusive and all children can participate fully in the activities as she gives careful consideration to the accessibility of resources. Transparent boxes are used so that even the youngest children can make choices and select their toys. There is also a folder containing a super inventory of the play materials stored in the garage. This enables children to choose from photographs the additional equipment they wish to play with. A wide range of play materials or posters depicting positive figures are in constant use so that children view images of diversity in the toys or artefacts they handle every day. These influences teach the children to respect and value other people and other ways of life.

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

Children are secure and relaxed with the childminder because she knows them extremely well. The childminder supports learning and development effectively by ensuring that activities are in tune with children's interests, enthusiasms and capabilities. For example, when children show an interest in aircraft the

childminder organises a visit to the local airport so that the children can watch aeroplanes taking off and landing. Consequently, the children now display great curiosity and are eager to point out to adults when they hear or see aircraft in the sky overhead.

Children's language development is effectively promoted as the childminder spends a lot of time talking to them. Numbers, mathematical language and colours are continually used in conversations. Children develop good problem solving skills as they explore shapes and sort items according to size, for example, as they stack graded cups to make towers. A range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, are easily accessible during everyday play. Children choose to look at books for pleasure and eagerly request that the childminder reads them stories. They play imaginatively with small world animals and with the role play kitchen equipment and are delighted when the childminder joins in their experiences as they prepare a meal. Children demonstrate that they learn about safety and potential dangers when they warn the childminder that food or the toy iron may be hot.

Children make good progress because the childminder uses her observations of what children know and do, to identify and individually plan for their next steps in learning. Discussions with parents and information gained when children first start contributes efficiently to this process of assessment. Photographs are used effectively to illustrate achievements and participation in special events. However, children may not achieve as much as they can because the childminder is not yet consistently using her observations to analyse and track children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Children understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle as they enjoy daily play and outings in the fresh air. Visits to local parks and walks in the vicinity extend opportunities for physical play. Children enjoy healthy snacks and access drinks throughout the day from drinking cups kept within their eyesight. They are encouraged to help prepare their food such as spreading toppings onto crumpets and they grow healthy vegetables such as runner beans. Their awareness and understanding of good hygiene routines is promoted well and clearly understood, as they spontaneously select their own individual hand towel. They play in a very clean and comfortable environment. Children's confidence and self-esteem increases due to the frequent praise and encouragement provided by the childminder. Their behaviour is good and there are clear house rules so that boundaries are fully understood.

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

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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