

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	19/03/2012
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 three children aged 15, 17 and 18 years. They live in a house in a residential area in South Ockendon, Essex. All areas of the childminder's house are registered for childminding. Access is via one low step into the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has two guinea pigs, a cat and a dog as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, of these no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently four 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 12 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 schools to take and collect children. She runs a local carer group and is a member of the National Childminding Association and an approved childminding network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder recognises and celebrates each child's individuality and effectively promotes inclusive practice so that all children feel secure and valued. Overall, she has good working relationships with parents and other early years professionals and ensures that children's needs are well met. Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder deploys her resources well and provides a broad range of stimulating learning opportunities. The documentation that promotes children's welfare and safety is mainly well maintained. The childminder demonstrates an effective capacity to maintain continuous improvement through training and evaluation of her practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the risk assessments to include anything with which children may come into contact
- encourage parents to add comments and contribute their observations of children's learning to the development records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is efficiently organised and has devised a good range of policies and procedures to promote the welfare and safety of the children. She has a clear understanding of how to safeguard the children in her care and has attended training so that she knows the steps to take if she has any concerns about their well-being. The childminder ensures that only adults who have suitability checks through the Criminal Records Bureau supervise the children. The good monitoring of visitors and arrangements for recording accidents, medication and pre-existing injuries all contribute to ensuring that children are protected from harm. Risk assessments and daily checks are carried out at regular intervals to ensure that most potential risks to children are minimised. However, children may not be fully protected as risk assessments do not always contain sufficient detail about all potential hazards with which children may come into contact. For example, the storage of potentially hazardous gym equipment. The childminder has developed a strong support network, such as back-up contingency cover with other childminders. Additionally on outings, the childminder carries the vital equipment and documentation needed to safeguard children's welfare to enable her to act without delay in the event of an emergency.

The childminder has a very positive attitude to developing her service and has completed a detailed self-evaluation. She is totally committed to providing a comfortable and stimulating environment for the children she cares for. The childminder attends a wealth of training events and since the last inspection has successfully achieved a National Vocational qualification at level 4 in Children's Care, Learning and Development. She takes a lead role in establishing effective working relationships with other early years professionals and meets regularly with other childminders to share ideas and good practice. The childminder has also established successful links with local schools and pre-schools to ensure that there are smooth transitions and continuity in children's care and learning.

The childminder has a good understanding of how to include all children and makes sure that they are happy and have fun. She gathers information about children's likes and dislikes as well as any individual needs, dietary requirements and allergies right from the start. Children take part in a range of interesting activities and experiences that help them to value diversity. For example, the children take part in activities to celebrate festivals from different cultures and they actively raise funds for various charities.

Children benefit from the effective working relationships that have been established with parents and carers. This is achieved through worthwhile discussions and sharing of information to ensure that both parties are kept fully informed about the routines and care needs of each child. The parents know that they can view their children's development folders at any time. However, the two-way flow of information is not yet fully established as parents are not yet contributing their comments or observations about children's learning at home to these records. Parents speak positively about the care provided and are impressed by the childminder's flexibility and professional approach and say that she goes the

'extra mile' with the children she looks after.

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

Children enjoy a full range of activities that help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. The play environment is conducive to learning and is rich in print, with a wide selection of books and meaningful captions and labels accessible to children. The childminder undertakes regular observations in order to effectively monitor children's progress and she routinely updates individual assessment records. Both planned and spontaneous observations are supported by carefully selected photographs that illustrate children's achievements. The childminder also tracks the children's progress to ensure that there are no gaps in the educational programme. Learning priorities are consistently identified so that activity planning is personalised to meet each child's needs.

Children are very settled and develop very good relationships with the childminder. They are interested learners who engage happily in activities and remain fully engrossed. For example, children are keen to help the childminder feed the guinea pigs or spend time persevering as they design models using construction toys. Children develop important skills to support their future learning as a result of the quality of the interactions they have with the childminder. She skilfully promotes their communication, literacy and numeracy. Children learn to solve problems within the daily routines and correctly calculate how many people are in the car during the school run or how many pieces of toast they have left on their plates.

The childminder appreciates the important role she has in setting a good example and her calm, gentle manner in all dealings with children helps to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Children's confidence and self-esteem grows as they respond to praise and encouragement. They play harmoniously and have many opportunities to make decisions and develop their independence skills. Interesting outings are organised to develop children's social skills and their knowledge of the local and wider environment. They have good opportunities to interact with other children and suitable adults at social events. Nearby venues such as farms, the beach and woodland are used well to develop children's knowledge of the natural world, including animals and wildlife.

Children's awareness of healthy lifestyles is well supported as fresh air and exercise is a feature of their everyday experiences. Children remove their outdoor shoes when indoors and consequently, young children or babies play in a house where there are high standards of hygiene and all rooms are meticulously clean. Children thrive because healthy menus cater for their needs and they enjoy wholesome and nutritious meals and snacks. Children learn about their personal safety and the consequences of their actions through gentle reminders from the childminder to take care. Smoke alarms are regularly tested so that children become aware of what to do in the event of an emergency.

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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