

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	22/09/2011
Inspector	June Oliver
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 1998. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and 16 years in a house in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, close to local school and shops. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, three of which may be in the early years age range. She is currently caring for four children in this age range all on a part time basis. The childminder also offers care for children over five years and up to nine years, and is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder collects children from the local school and makes use of the local children's centre, library, parks and toddler groups. The family has a rabbit and fish in an aquarium. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The childminder is a member of an approved childminding network and receives nursery funding for three- and four- year old children. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care because she forms good relationships with them and their parents. She observes children's play and uses this information well to plan appropriate activities so that they make good progress towards the early learning goals. She generally keeps parents well informed about what their children are doing and obtains useful information about their preferences, starting points and routines. This ensures that children's individual needs are being met. The childminder has evaluated her practice to identify her strengths and weaknesses, and is committed to improving her provision for all children. Most required policies and procedures are in place and are effective in practice.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure parents are involved in their child's continuous learning and development through consistently sharing learning records and obtaining parental feedback
- develop the use of positive images that help children to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, special educational needs and disabilities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded in the setting because the childminder has a good knowledge of local safeguarding policies and procedures. She has completed safeguarding training and has an effective policy and procedure in place should she have a concern about a child. Children are kept very safe whilst in the childminder's care because she supervises them well and is vigilant when out and about. The childminder completes risk assessments to ensure children's safety around the setting and when on outings. Children are further protected because the childminder keeps good records including attendance, medication and accident records.

The childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and uses this to support children in their learning. The environment is well organised to enable children to select their own activities from a well resourced playroom. As a result children become independent learners choosing from resources including technology toys, such as a laptop and musical keyboard, construction toys and arts and craft materials.

The childminder effectively evaluates her practice and is aware of her strengths and weaknesses. She has identified priorities for improvement to raise outcomes for children. She would like to learn a sign language to be able to support children with communication difficulties more effectively. The childminder continually looks for ways to improve her practice and involves the children and parents in this by asking them what they would like.

The childminder forms good relationships with parents and carers. She obtains written information about each child to enable individual children's needs to be effectively met. Parents are generally well informed about their children's care. For example, the childminder and parents verbally share information about children's food and drink intake and activities. However, learning journals are not consistently shared with parents and their feedback asked for. This means that children are not effectively supported in making progress towards the early learning goals. Excellent relationships have been developed with other professionals who visit the setting and provide support for a child with additional needs. This ensures that individual needs are being met most effectively. Good use has also been made of the local authority development worker and children's centre staff to support her practice.

The childminder effectively supports children to understand their own and others cultures and beliefs, such as by celebrating a range of festivals and children's birthdays. A good range of multicultural resources such as books, pretend play and role play items are available for children to learn about differences and diversity. However, children may not feel totally included in the setting as there are few resources promoting positive images of different types of families around the setting. The childminder offers sensitive care to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. She adapts activities to ensure that all

children can access them. This means that the individual needs of all children are met and all children are included fully in the life of the setting.

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

Children enjoy their time at the setting as good relationships have been built between themselves and their caring and responsive childminder. This ensures that children are confident to select activities for themselves and ask for those they want, such as painting. The childminder meets the individual needs of the children well and provides well-planned activities and outings. Children are able to move around the setting freely and safely because the childminder ensures their environment is safe. For example, children know how to handle tools safely, such as using glue sticks to stick. This encourages children to become independent learners. The children are beginning to understand about being safe when out of the setting. For example the childminder teaches them road safety and that they need to hold onto the buggy.

Children's good health is very effectively promoted by the childminder. Children play outside or in the large garden on a daily basis to develop their physical skills. For example they use the slide in the garden to practice climbing and play chasing games to run around and understand that being active is good for them. Children are learning about healthy food choices as they choose fruit for snack. Babies develop an awareness of healthy food as they eat brown bread sandwiches and cheese for lunch. Children are encouraged to become independent in their personal routines, such as hand washing before meals, from an early age. Babies show an awareness of healthy routines as they hold out hands to be wiped after lunch and know where to go for their nappy to be changed.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because the childminder plans activities around their interests and needs. Regular observations and assessments are linked to the areas of learning and next steps are identified. This ensures learning covers all areas of the curriculum. Children are developing their language skills as the childminder asks relevant questions and allows time for responses. For example, the childminder asks children what pictures they select from the song sack. Children practice early writing skills as they paint. Young children develop their mathematical skills as the childminder encourages counting during everyday activities, such as counting the sandwiches at lunch. Children learn how to use information technology as they use electronic kitchen toys during pretend play. This helps to develop their skills for the future. Children also learn about the wider world by using the library, attending toddler groups and going on outings in the local community.

Children behave well in the setting because the childminder has clear and consistent boundaries. She offers clear explanations for the house rules and involves children in making them up. This ensures children feel settled and confident to explore the setting. Children are learning about their own and other

cultures and beliefs because they celebrate some festivals and birthdays together.

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	1
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	1
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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