

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	202627
Inspection date	24/08/2011
Inspector	Mrs Jenny Howell
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 has been registered since 1998. She lives with her adult son in a residential area of Kelvedon, Essex. All of the home is registered for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. The childminder has pet cats and chickens.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of three children in the early years age range. She is currently caring for three children under the age of five. She is also registered on the Compulsory and Voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is currently caring for seven children over the age of five. The childminder provides both full-time and part-time care during term time and through the school holidays. The childminder is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The childminder is a member of the local childminding network and is accredited to receive funding for early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment, which has been organised to fully meet the individual needs of all children. This allows children to become fully engaged in purposeful play and learning. As a result, children make very good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder works very effectively with parents, and other professionals in order to identify and meet children's varying needs. A comprehensive system of self-evaluation is in place to support continuous improvement. On-going professional development supports the childminder in providing high quality care and education.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- Continue to enhance and develop the learning environment to display more text and numerals in purposeful contexts and to provide further images of different languages, dress, customs and cultures.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Extremely comprehensive procedures are followed to monitor and assess safety, including very detailed risk assessments of the premises and of all outings. Risk assessments are also in place for different types of activity, for example water play

and using large garden equipment. All safety equipment, such as smoke detectors, are checked on a regular basis. The setting is extremely effective in safeguarding children. All relevant documents are in place and are successfully implemented in order to support the childminder in keeping children safe. The childminder has an excellent understanding of child protection procedures and keeps this up to date through regular training. Current training in first aid is in place, allowing the childminder to act quickly in the event of an accident or emergency.

The childminder has a highly effective system of self-evaluation in place. This effectively supports her in reflecting upon what she is doing well, and the impact that this has upon children. She also has an extremely insightful development plan in place. Through this the childminder identifies areas in which she could improve outcomes for children and takes action to bring about real improvements. Parents' views are sought both on an informal basis and through questionnaires on specific topics, such as food. The childminder continues to improve and develop her skills, through regular training and by accessing support from the National Childminding Association.

The childminder makes extremely good use of space and resources. She ensures that all children are able to access different types of play, with space and time in which to rest and relax as needed. Children have regular access to the garden and excellent use of local facilities in order to enhance play and learning. Effective use of low-level storage boxes ensure that even very young children can choose what they want to play with, allowing them to take the lead in their own learning.

All children are cared for in line with their individual needs. In order to achieve this the childminder works extremely closely with parents. She also promotes an acceptance and understanding of difference and diversity by supporting children in celebrating their own uniqueness. The childminder has established good links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This allows her to support continuity of care when children also attend other settings, as well as ensuring an exchange of relevant information.

The childminder establishes extremely positive relationships with parents. She ensures a regular exchange of information through a variety of methods including daily chats, diaries, newsletters and regular access to progress and development records. The childminder is always seeking to improve methods of communication. She has recently trialled use of an electronic journal as a method of sharing photographs and information with parents securely. All relevant parental permissions are obtained, ensuring that the childminder can care for children in line with parents' wishes. Parents comment extremely positively about the childminder. They value the amount of feedback they receive about their child and like the range of meals and snacks provided.

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

Children are cared for in a well-organised and stimulating environment. Resources and equipment closely reflect the needs of the children attending and are easy to

access. The learning environment is peaceful yet purposeful, with children of different ages playing together cooperatively. Displays of children's art work and some pictures, labels and posters help create an inclusive atmosphere. Children are extremely well supported by the childminder who is very aware of, and attentive to their changing needs. She is highly positive and enthusiastic as she interacts with them.

The childminder keeps a detailed record of each child's learning journey. This includes observations of what children can do and have done, illustrated with numerous photographs and comments. The childminder is able to use this effectively, in combination with the Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance to identify exactly which stage of development children have reached in each area of learning. As a result, the childminder is able to plan and direct children towards activities which are tailored to their individual learning and development needs.

Children are highly motivated and engaged at all times. They independently access a wide range of creative and open ended activities and concentrate for extended periods of time. For example, children spend the morning turning a large cardboard box into a den and then proceed to fix it using the play tools. Learning is further enhanced through regular trips around the local area. This includes looking after an allotment, visiting the zoo, shops and nearby small farm. Numerous sensory and exploratory activities such as treasure baskets and messy play, help to support toddlers and babies in using their senses to find out about the world around them.

Highly effective safety procedures ensure that children are safe and feel safe while with the childminder. They learn about how to behave when walking around the local area and who to turn to should they need help. Children follow the simple house rules which are in place and show considerable regard for the welfare and safety of other children. Children have an extremely good relationship with the childminder, allowing them to feel confident to play and learn without inhibition.

Posters around the home help remind children about simple, effective hygiene routines. Children are supported by the childminder in following these and for example, remember to wash their hands after playing in the garden and before eating. Children have frequent opportunities to exercise, regularly walking around the local area and enjoying access to the garden and its physical play equipment whenever they wish. The childminder provides children with a highly varied and nutritious menu of snacks and meals and also fully supports parents in sending healthy food from home. As a result children are well supported in making healthy choices about what they eat and drink.

Children become involved in the local community as they take part in events such as a scarecrow decorating competition. They take responsibility for taking good care of each other and their environment. Children behave extremely well, treating each other and the childminder with high levels of respect. This, in combination with activities based on world festivals, helps children to learn to value difference and diversity.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop skills for the future. They access

stories and information from a wide range of books. They visit the library to access books on the topics which interest them. Learning about maths and numbers is an integral part of the daily routine, with puzzles and construction materials used to develop problem solving skills. Children learn about ICT and its practical applications. For example, using an electronic device to learn to play the keyboard and using an interactive treasure hunt as an exciting alternative to the traditional treasure hunt. Real life role-play such as making tea helps children to make sense of the world around them and to use an increasing vocabulary in context.

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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