

Childminder report

Inspection date: 11 July 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children make good progress with their learning and development at this home-from-home setting. The childminder ensures that all children feel secure, valued and have a strong sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to bring comfort toys from home, and their interests are reflected in planned activities. Thoughtful, inclusive practices, such as supporting bilingual children with their language development, are firmly embedded.

Themes, such as sea life, are explored in depth over time, allowing the childminder to revisit concepts and check children's understanding before extending their learning. Children collaborate together to produce a final sea-life collage. They develop strength in their hands as they cut, glue and colour pictures of sea animals. The childminder draws attention to colour mixing, helping children notice how red and yellow make orange. These moments are used effectively to extend children's curiosity and knowledge.

Children demonstrate high levels of confidence and enjoyment as they engage in meaningful play. The childminder plays alongside them in a warm and playful manner, forming strong bonds. She acts as a positive role model, consistently promoting polite behaviour, sharing, and turn-taking. Visual prompts, such as the 'This is how we play' rules, help children understand behavioural expectations, contributing to a calm and respectful atmosphere.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of child development and uses this knowledge to identify purposeful next steps for each child in her care. She uses observations, parent input, and assessment tools to plan targeted support. For example, next steps include promoting speech and language for younger children. Older children are supported for their transition to school through the development of emotional regulation, and social skills, such as turn taking and sharing.
- Activities are thoughtfully planned, with a strong emphasis on outdoor learning and real-world experiences to enrich the curriculum. Children regularly participate in trips to parks, forests and playgroups. Special trips are organised to visit the 'Gruffalo trail' and local airports, where children enjoy observing planes and emergency vehicles, helping them to learn about the world around them.
- Partnerships with parents are a key strength. The childminder maintains open and regular communication through daily handovers and journals. She shares updates, photos and details of children's developmental milestones. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and are provided with practical

ideas to support learning at home, including information on healthy eating.

- The childminder consistently models new vocabulary and encourages conversations as children play. She introduces new language, including the names of sea animals, such as 'basking shark', and talks about the foods they eat. The childminder skilfully uses open-ended questions to extend children's thinking as they estimate the number of legs an octopus has. Books are used to further embed topics, and children enjoy stories in the afternoons. However, the childminder does not always explore the use of songs and rhymes to support children's language development even further.
- Mathematical concepts are well embedded in the daily routines. The childminder uses everyday moments to develop children's understanding of number, size and quantity. For example, children count scoops of water and estimate how many are needed to fill a bucket. Children confidently count beyond 20. Older children begin to explore concepts related to time by discussing the positioning of hands on the clock.
- Children are familiar with routines, and they follow instructions from the childminder well. They are developing skills to manage personal care routines such as wiping their faces and using the toilet. However, the childminder does not always consider ways to extend self-care skills for older children, to further promote their independence.
- The childminder ensures that all mandatory training is kept up to date and has identified further training to support the needs of children currently in her care. Policies and procedures are shared with parents, supporting a consistent approach to care. The childminder is reflective and has a clear vision for continuous improvement. She continually evaluates the learning environment to ensure it remains stimulating and responsive to children's needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- consider ways to incorporate more rhymes and songs in the curriculum to strengthen children's development of communication and language even further
- provide more opportunities for older children to develop their independence during routine activities such as mealtimes.

Setting details

Unique reference number	590215
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10398555
Type of provision	Childminder
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childminder
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	4
Date of previous inspection	29 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

The childminder registered in 2001 and lives in Essex. She operates Monday to Friday from 8.15am to 5.30pm, all year round. The childminder holds an appropriate qualification at level 3 and provides funded early education for eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Emily Woodhead

Inspection activities

- The childminder and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity that the childminder carried out with the children.
- The children communicated with the inspector during the inspection. The inspector took account of written views from parents.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation such as evidence of the suitability of the childminder and a selection of other records.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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