

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY286143
Inspection date	10/10/2011
Inspector	Patricia Champion

Type of setting	Childminder
------------------------	-------------

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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 2004. She lives with her husband, two adult children and a child aged eight years. They live in a house in a residential area in Langdon Hills, Essex. All areas of the childminder's house are used for childminding, except for the third floor. Access is via one low step into the front door. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a dog, cat and keep fish in an aquarium.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time, three of whom may be in the early years. She is currently minding six children in the early years age group 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 to local schools to take and collect children and attends the local carer and toddler group on a regular basis. 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.

Children are skilfully supported and their individuality is fully respected and valued because the childminder works extremely closely with parents and carers. The childminder's effective planning, observation and assessment systems enable children to make good progress in their learning. Children's safety and welfare is promoted through the mainly effective policies and procedures. Links with all other providers have yet to be fully established to ensure children benefit from an integrated approach to their learning. The childminder is motivated and fully committed to developing her practice in order to promote outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review and revise the policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting to ensure that they reflect current practice
- extend working in partnership with other professionals in relation to the children who attend full-time education, to enhance continuity in care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted by the childminder who has a clear understanding of her role in child protection. All adults likely to be in contact with the children undergo the relevant background checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. Efficient risk assessment is conducted relating to the premises, equipment and outings. The recording of all visitors to and from the home and arrangements for recording accidents, medication or pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring that children are safeguarded from harm. The childminder attends first aid training every three years to ensure that she can deal confidently with any emergency situations as they arise. Good use is made of items, such as safety gates, monitors with both sound and vision, and cupboard locks to keep children safe. All necessary records and documents are systematically organised with the majority accurately maintained. They are stored securely and used effectively to provide a clear framework for the care of children. However, there is potential for misunderstanding as some of the written policies and procedures do not contain all the pertinent information about current practice.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and inclusive home, where their unique needs are fully known and respected. Space and resources are extremely well organised inside, with the childminder continually developing the outside play area to make it stimulating and challenging for children. Children have great fun as they access an extensive range of good quality toys and resources freely in the designated play areas. The childminder maintains a very good provision because she is committed to enhancing the service she provides on a continual basis. Self-evaluation is accurate and the childminder attends courses or does online training to update her childcare knowledge and skills.

The childminder works exceptionally well with parents and carers, continually collating and exchanging clear information. Comprehensive information is gathered about care routines from the outset and this helps children feel confident and secure. This information also enables the childminder to plan and provide an inclusive environment building on individual children's experiences and knowledge. The childminder provides parents with a wealth of information about their children's care, learning and development through daily notebooks, observation and assessment records, newsletters and verbal communication. Parents become involved in their children's learning by contributing their comments and observations to the development records and also provide their views and suggestions regularly on questionnaires. They make very positive comments about the childminder and really appreciate how happy their children are in her care and say that her organisational skills and professionalism are 'second to none'. The childminder has developed extremely strong relationships with other local childminders and pre-schools. She plans activities specifically to help children with the transitions into new early years settings. However, the partnerships with the reception teachers of children who have just started school are not yet full embedded to promote continuity in care and learning.

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

Children are very happy and settled in the warm and inviting play environment. They show high levels of confidence as they access toys and resources independently. Behaviour is exemplary and children play harmoniously by sharing and taking turns with the toys. The childminder is extremely knowledgeable about each child's particular interests and plans experiences that cover all areas of learning. She makes sure that particular favourites, such as small world animals, dinosaurs or motorcycles are kept within eyesight so that children can return to them at any time. The childminder continually counts with children and points out colours and shapes so that children start to sort and group items. The children giggle and laugh as they take baby dolls on imaginative journeys in the pushchairs or wear dressing-up clothes and act out scenarios from real life experiences. A wide variety of art and craft materials are available so that children can practise their mark making and create pictures or models.

Children's awareness of the wider world is promoted as they play with a very good range of toys depicting positive images of differences and diversity. Planned activities linked to cultural festivals and traditional events are also provided to further develop children's knowledge in this area. Frequent outings are planned to local farms and parks to develop children's knowledge of the natural world and promote their physical skills. Spontaneous events, such as finding snails in the garden are used well to stimulate children's curiosity and promote learning. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The childminder undertakes perceptive observations and regularly uses these, along with photographs and samples of the children's artwork to record and track their development. These systems enable her to effectively identify and support children's next steps in learning.

Children's health and safety is well maintained. There are highly effective hygiene routines with children using individually named towels and a hands-free soap dispenser to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Nappy changing and toilet training is hygienically and sensitively undertaken with lots of praise to raise children's confidence and self-esteem. The childminder promotes healthy eating and has a secure understanding of the benefits of providing children with nutritious food. Children help grow tomatoes outdoors so that they begin to learn about the foods that are good for you. Drinks are always easily accessible so that children do not become thirsty or dehydrated. The constant vigilance of the childminder ensures that children remain safe at all times. Activities are promoted to develop children's understanding of personal safety and potential dangers in the home. They learn to use tools carefully and in safety. Fire drills are regularly practised so that they know 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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
---	-----

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
--	-----