

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY334433
Inspection date	08/12/2010
Inspector	Moira Oliver
Type of setting	Childminder

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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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 2006 and lives with her family in a village near Colchester. The whole of the childminder's home is registered, however, childminding mostly takes place downstairs. A secure enclosed garden is used for outdoor play activities. The childminder has two dogs, two cats, a rabbit, a cockatiel, tropical fish and 25 chickens as pets. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years at any one time. She is currently minding five children, three of whom are in the early years age range.

The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language. She also offers care to older children and is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder takes and collects children from the local school and goes to several toddler groups regularly. She attends story time at the library, groups at the Children's Centre as well as childminding groups. She is an accredited childminder and a member of an approved childminding network. She is able to receive early education funding for three and four-year-olds.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children have fun and make very good progress in their learning and development. They build close relationships with the childminder and the other children who attend. Children's welfare is promoted and they are generally safe and secure and learn to live healthy lives. Children benefit because the childminder works closely with the parents and strong trusting relationships are built. The childminder is devoted to her role and strives to improve her practice further through consistent monitoring and evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure doorways are free from obstructions to allow ease of access in the case of emergency evacuation.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a very good understanding of her roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. She keeps her training updated to ensure she is confident to put procedures into place if necessary. Clear, detailed policies and procedures support her practice. They are shared with the parents who sign them to record that they have read and understood them. Children are supervised at all times and robust procedures ensure they cannot leave the premises unattended and

unauthorised persons cannot gain access. Risk assessments are detailed and carried out on all areas of her home. However, identified hazards are not always addressed promptly. For example, furniture in front of the main bedroom door prevents easy access of the premises at night time if an emergency evacuation is necessary, potentially compromising children's safety.

Resources are used effectively to promote equality and diversity. The childminder increases her own resources by borrowing from the toy library, making sure resources reflect the children's individual interests and abilities. They discuss their own cultures and traditions using board games about countries of the world and dressing-up in costumes. Children have opportunities to hear languages in addition to English and discussions take place on similarities and difference, supporting children to understand and value their own and other cultures.

The childminder is dedicated to her role as a childminder. She works hard to ensure she provides the very best she can to enable all children to develop to their full potential. She is qualified and attends a range of appropriate workshops and courses to increase her knowledge and skills in childcare. She reflects on her practice through self-evaluation and works closely with other childminders, supporting each other and sharing good practice. She works in partnership with the local school that some children attend and builds strong and trusting relationships with the parents. Parents are involved in their child's learning within the setting by daily sharing of information through diaries and discussions with the childminder. They receive valuable records of their child's development and the activities they take part in through scrapbooks of their children's work and photographs.

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

Children are happy and confident in the stimulating learning environment. They happily involve the childminder in their play as they chat with her making voices and stories up for the play figures. The childminder provides high levels of care and individual attention and strong relationships have developed. They have lots of opportunities to socialise with other children as they attend toddler groups, childminding groups and various other play activities. Children make very good progress. The childminder keeps detailed observations and assessments which are consistently used to provide a balance of planned and child-initiated play experiences which respond to the children's interests.

Children's language is promoted well in the print rich environment. They point out letters that are in their names from the displays and sound them out. Children are encouraged to think for themselves as the childminder uses open-ended and relevant questions in their play. They enjoy making patterns in the outdoor sandpit and have many opportunities to mark make using a large chalk board. They use mathematical language as they compare size, shape and positioning in their play with the dolls house figures.

Children explore a variety of objects and textures when using well thought out

sensory resource boxes. For example, they talk about the feel of soft and rough materials and sort through shells and stones looking at the patterns and sparkles in some. They learn about their own and other cultures as they visit places of interest in the community and celebrate festivals throughout the year. They use their imaginations as they play in the garden making dens with an old settee, cushions and material. Children have valuable experiences with the childminder's pets, for example, they watch chicks hatch from eggs and learn to care for them. Children express themselves through a variety of craft media and all their art work is valued and displayed either in scrapbooks or on the walls.

Children's welfare is promoted well and they are safe and healthy. They enjoy fresh air and exercise daily in the childminder's garden or out in the community as they visit parks, play areas, the beach and fields. They climb, run, jump, crawl and pedal cars and bikes developing their physical skills further. Healthy and balanced meals and snacks provide them with opportunities to talk about healthy eating and try a variety of foods including fresh fruit and vegetables. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they practise fire drills and learn about road safety. The childminder uses consistent strategies to support the children to manage their behaviour. She reinforces positive behaviour using praise and encouragement and uses age-appropriate explanations to help them learn right from wrong. She treats the children with respect and values them as individuals, providing a positive role model for them to follow.

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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