

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY336656
Inspection date	04/08/2011
Inspector	Anne Daly
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 2006. She lives with her husband and two children, aged five and two years old, in Witham, Essex, where she employs two registered assistants. The whole of the premises is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. The childminder walks to a local school and pre-school to take and collect children. She takes children to the library, park, toddler groups and drop-in sessions at the local children's centre. The family keep fish.

The childminder is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for four children under eight years. She is currently minding seven children on a part-time basis, six in the early years age range and one in the age range of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. She supports bilingual children.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and of the Braintree District Children Come First Childminding Network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The experienced childminder has a proficient understanding of the learning and development requirements within the Early Years Foundation Stage. A wide range of motivating activities helps children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Excellent partnerships with parents ensure that individual children's needs are well met, while she is developing partnerships with other settings when children receive care and education at more than one setting. She maintains the majority of the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting. She recognises the importance of self-evaluation and is proactive in making continuous improvements for the benefit of children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the written safeguarding policy to include information about the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against her assistants or a family member
- review the risk assessment to ensure that it covers anything with which a child may come into contact, this refers to the trailing wire on the landing
- develop further the opportunities for partnership working with other settings when children receive care and education at more than one setting.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are being safeguarded through the childminder's good knowledge of her safeguarding role. She annually reviews the wide range of policies and procedures to ensure that children are being safeguarded. However, her safeguarding policy only reflects what she will do if an allegation was made against her, but not her registered assistants, which potentially means that children may not be being fully safeguarded. The childminder and her registered assistants have been appropriately vetted, with evidence of their Criminal Records Bureau checks held on file. Good systems are in place to verify the identity of any visitors to further safeguard children. Children are protected from harm through risk assessments, identifying the majority of potential dangers within her home and garden. The childminder completes an annual risk assessment and a written daily check list to ensure that each area to be used by children is safe and secure. The children are mainly cared for on the ground floor, although, young children rest in travel cots in an upstairs bedroom, with the listening monitor switched on and the childminder regularly checking them. However, the risk assessments do not include everything with which a child may come into contact, such a trailing electrical wire on the landing, resulting in children potentially not being fully safeguarded if they climbed out of the cot. The childminder undertakes very detailed risk assessments of everyday outings, including street maps of her routes, to ensure that great care is taken with children's safety when out walking to different venues. She ensures that each child's personal details form provides the necessary care information to enable her to meet individual children's needs.

The childminder is enthusiastic about her work with children and is committed to bring about sustainable improvements to her setting and to the outcomes for children. Since the last inspection, she has gained a Cache Level 3 Diploma in Home-based Childcare to further develop her knowledge of child development and to help children to develop and progress well towards their early learning goals. Varied environments well support children's learning and development by giving them plenty of opportunities to gain confidence to explore the world. The enabling environment provides children with positive images to challenge their thinking and to help them embrace differences in gender, language, religions and cultural backgrounds. The childminder effectively organises her daily routines to ensure that children receive plenty of encouragement and support in the different learning environments. Her established routines enable children to begin to look after themselves, for example, putting their personal possessions on named low-level pegs.

The childminder has an effective equal opportunities policy and values and respects each individual child. She has a sound understanding that some children may have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including recognising the strength of professional relationships in creating an approach to best meet the needs of individual children. Partnerships with other childminders are well established and contribute to children's achievements, especially at the childminders' drop-in sessions at the local children's centre. Some children attend two settings delivering the learning and development requirements and so the

childminder prepares termly reports for parents to pass on to the other settings. However, these partnerships are not fully developed to ensure that they complement the education and care that the child receives in the respective settings.

The childminder takes effective steps to regularly evaluate the setting for the benefit of the children's learning and development, including creating a designated playroom within the conservatory to enable children to self-select their activities. She does not leave her registered assistants alone with minded children, but following self-evaluation she is now trying to arrange paediatric first aid courses for her registered assistants before they are left alone with children in emergency situations.

The childminder significantly recognises the importance of fully including parents in decisions integral to their children's well-being. Parents acknowledge that they understand the policies and procedures supporting her very well-organised care practices. They have written letters specifically for this inspection, while others have verbally confirmed that they are kept very well informed about all aspects of their children's achievements, well-being and development. There are excellent settling-in procedures, newsletters and a two-way diary showing how children have spent their day with the childminder and what they have been doing at home. Parents receive termly reports, together with children's folders full of photographs and observations supporting their learning across all six areas. They have extensive opportunities to comment about their children's progress to ensure their active involvement in their children's learning journeys.

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

Children's welfare and learning needs are met by a confident, warm and caring childminder, who understands and adapts activities to meet their individual needs. They thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder and develop and achieve well. The childminder effectively identifies gaps in children's learning through observations of their progress and achievements. She maintains individual profiles containing photographs and observations linked to the six areas of learning to enable her to reference the children's learning journeys to learning and developmental matters and to highlight their stages of development.

Children make choices about the resources with which they play, while engaging all their senses, such as repeatedly investigating and working out that one action affects others when playing musical instruments. The childminder uses relaxed opportunities for children to develop spoken language through allowing time to initiate conversations with them, especially when looking at and describing the different fruits to be offered at snack time. Her skilful questioning extends children's thinking when describing whether the fruit textures are hard or soft. She further extends their learning by covering the fruit and removing one, before asking children which fruit is missing to develop their problem-solving skills in a fun way. Her wide choice of fruit enables children to develop their own likes and dislikes, while printing with fruit also encourages them to talk about healthy

options. She actively supports children well to develop a good understanding of the effects on the environment of everyday living, including saving and sorting waste materials for recycling. She praises their achievements to build their confidence and to help them to feel valued.

Children are provided with opportunities to develop the necessary skills for their future, including play provision incorporating technology to enable them to investigate how to operate mobile telephones. They take part in many activities supporting different charities to help them to learn to respect the needs of others. They behave well because of their childminder's consistent boundaries for behaviour within her home and on outings. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, which is demonstrated by them describing how they hold onto the buggy when walking to and from school. The childminder actively encourages their independence skills by doing things for themselves and they confidently know that by washing their hands and having individual towels they are preventing the spread of any infection.

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	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	2
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
--	-----