

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY336733
Inspection date	19/01/2011
Inspector	Sarah Williams
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.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2006. She lives in a house in South Woodham Ferrers with her husband and two children. All areas of the property are used for childminding. Children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of three children aged from birth to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting also offers care to children aged up to eight years. The childminder attends a parent and toddler group and visits the local library, park and playground and other amenities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's needs are excellently met whilst in the care of the childminder. They are recognised and treated as unique individuals and benefit from sensitively tailored activities designed to help them progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, based on children's interests and developmental stages. All necessary information is gathered from parents and carers, and a two-way flow of information ensures good communication at all times. Highly robust systems and effective daily routines result in a environment where children are very safe and secure. The childminder has started a system for self-evaluation, to enable her to continue to develop her practice in a positive way and secure further improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending outdoor activities to include growing and cultivation of plants to introduce children to lifecycles and care of living things
- developing the system of self-evaluation to ensure improvements are focused and targeted to maximise positive outcomes for children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder confidently ensures children are fully protected from abuse and neglect. She has an excellent understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and has developed clearly defined procedures for following up any concerns about children's welfare. Through the completion of all necessary checks, the childminder has confirmed her own suitability and that of other household members. All paperwork and documentation is maintained to an

exceptionally high standard to promote the efficient and safe management of the provision and support children's care and learning needs. Thorough and robust risk assessments are undertaken regularly, and recorded, to ensure children remain safe and secure in all areas of the home and during outings. A very comprehensive range of toys and resources, rotated frequently, is available and children freely select from the large, well-organised toy cupboard. Natural and household resources are provided in a treasure basket for babies to explore, developing all their senses.

The childminder takes a highly professional approach and uses her prior experience of childcare, as a private nanny, to inform her childminding practice. She has completed a self-evaluation form as a tool to begin to review some areas of her practice and identify the aspects she plans to build on. There is an effective policy regarding inclusive practice and the childminder clearly recognises that every child is an individual and therefore unique. A range of resources reflecting diversity are provided and backed up with art and craft activities as appropriate to celebrate festivals and world cultures through a frequently updated programme. The childminder has extensive experience and knowledge to support care for children with a varied range of special educational needs and/or disabilities; she demonstrates a positive attitude to adapting the provision to meet children's specific needs and linking up with outside professionals for support and advice.

Partnerships with parents and carers are highly effective; they demonstrate this with cards and letters of appreciation. The childminder fosters professional and supportive relationships with parents, ensuring they feel at ease in discussing their children's changing needs on a daily basis. Each child's daily diary is used to encourage a meaningful exchange of information between the child's home and the setting. For example, the childminder details the activities children have enjoyed as well as their eating and sleeping routines. The childminder meets regularly with other childcarers, which results in a stimulating, supportive network for her and varied social contacts for the minded children. The childminder is proactive in developing links with the other early years settings attended by children to reinforce their learning and to ensure continuity of care and open communication.

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

Children benefit from a well thought out range of stimulating and purposeful toys and play opportunities which promote their progress across all six areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are clearly very secure in the homely surroundings and content in the childminder's care, forming close, warm bonds with her and other family members and confidently approaching visitors to share toys and games. Children respond well to the childminder's calm, proficient approach, smiling and interacting whilst playing with their toys as well as during routine care. They have space to move around independently and to spread out as they play in the child-centred environment. The floor is used for small world play with figures and vehicles, as well as construction, whilst the table is set aside for meals and craft activities. Children are helped to understand the need to share;

they demonstrate their developing social skills and early awareness of taking turns. Children have frequent opportunities to play outside in the childminder's garden, which is fully equipped for various types of play and exploration. They visit the zoo for close-up experiences of wild animals and an exciting day out, as well as other local places of interest. The childminder's routines include daily walks to and from school, providing good opportunities to spot birds, construction vehicles and so on, and they develop vocabulary as they discuss what they can see. Children's designing and making skills are encouraged by sessions of modelling using found and recycled materials, whilst early mark making is promoted with a range of art and craft resources and tools. Parents enjoy personalised cards on special occasions, successfully utilising photographs of the children along with their artwork.

The childminder observes children as they play, making good use of a digital camera, and uses her knowledge of how children learn and develop to extend their progress. For example, she offers a variety of tactile experiences to tap into children's curiosity in textures and colours. She observes children and notes their progress and development. Her observations are used to form a developmental record, or learning journey, for each child. These show activities across all the aspects of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and effectively identify the next steps in learning. Consequently, children's progress towards the early learning goals is good and is very clearly charted in the learning journeys, which are regularly shared with parents and carers.

Children are cared for in a very clean and hygienic environment. Snacks and meals comprising of healthy options are provided by the childminder, taking account of preferences and dietary needs. Drinks are available at all times for children to help themselves. Children's home routines are respected and incorporated, meeting their individual needs and aiding their feelings of security and belonging. Children understand and follow hygiene and hand-washing routines, helping to prevent the spread of infection. All necessary safety measures are in place, and regular risk assessments ensure the environment remains safe. The regular emergency evacuation practises help children learn how to stay safe. The childminder has a highly professional approach and is fully committed to extending her practice to include new and stimulating activities for the children, ensuring that they remain engaged and continue to benefit from the developmental opportunities and care provided.

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	2

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	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	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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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