

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/07/2010
Inspector	Lynn Amelia Hartigan
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.

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. The childminder lives with her husband and two children aged four and six years in Chelmsford, Essex. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. Access to the childminder's home is via a low-step.

The childminder is registered to care for four children at any one time when working alone. The childminder is registered to work with an assistant and can care for up to nine children when working together. There are currently six children attending. All of whom are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. This provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's individual needs are promoted well as the childminder has good policies and procedures that underpin her practice enabling her to care for children in an inclusive environment. The childminder is able to demonstrate that information regarding the children's individual routines and development is available. Good observations of the children enable the childminder to effectively plan for the children's next steps in learning. The childminder continues to develop systems which enable her to identify areas for improvement and to raise standards. The childminder's commitment toward self-evaluation and training demonstrates a commitment to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for babies and younger children to explore and experiment with natural materials.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder effectively promotes the children's learning and welfare, as some very good opportunities for learning and fun activities are provided within the home and garden. The childminder is familiar with and aware of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and is enthusiastic to complete training whenever possible, to support her knowledge. The childminder is confident and fully understands her responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children. Appropriate guidance and up-to-date legislation is at hand should there be any concerns regarding any child's well-being.

The childminder is vigilant within the home to ensure the children's safety at all times and risk assessments are in place which includes outings. Visitors are requested to sign a visitors book and are introduced to the children to ensure they are familiar and comfortable in their company. A good policy and procedure is in place with regard to the children's safety on outings. For example, children have use of suitable equipment, such as buggies and are learning about keeping themselves safe as the childminder discusses road safety with them. They wear fluorescent jackets and older children carry identification cards confirming the childminders details. The childminder ensures that members of the household who require suitable checks have completed these, to ensure the children's safety is never compromised.

As a result of the childminders motivation to provide a good standard of care, children appear happy, secure and contented within the home. The childminder has developed a system to regularly evaluate her practices and values parents' contributions to assist her in the self-evaluation process. The childminder is able to confidently discuss her process for self-evaluation and continually researches for new ideas and opportunities for the children. Written evidence from parents confirms that they are very happy with every aspect of care offered to their children. Good relationships with the parents ensure they are fully informed about the care and learning opportunities offered to their children. For example parents are provided with monthly newsletters, information packs that include all policies a welcome pack and the childminder has her own website that parents can visit.

The childminder utilises the space within her home both indoors and outdoors effectively creating a welcoming and child-friendly environment. There is a notice board in the hall which displays useful information, certificates and photos for parents. Children's art work and the Early Years Foundation Stage is displayed within the playroom. The childminder manages her time effectively and provides children with good individual care and attention, working some days with an assistant. Toys, equipment and resources are easily accessible to the children. Children are treated with equal concern within the childminder's home. For example, children's individual routines are discussed with the parents and their needs maintained. The childminder demonstrates a commitment to caring for children in an inclusive provision whereby every child is unique and speaks intuitively of the children in her care. Some good toys, books and resources are available that reflect diversity. Children have recently enjoyed activities celebrating the world cup, they have made flags from around the world and cooking activities.

The childminder is able to demonstrate how she encourages parents to share information about their child's developmental stages when they first start. The childminder has developed a good system of documenting the children's initial assessment with the parents, and their continuous development, clearly identifying the children's next steps. As a result of the childminder developing good partnerships with other professionals, children receive continuity of care and support regarding their learning and developmental needs.

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

Children are comfortable and happy in the company of the childminder. Their welfare, learning and developmental needs are met to a good standard. Children are supported by the childminder to enable them to develop and make progress in their individual development. Young children initiate their own play, selecting toys from a wide variety available to them. For example, enjoying stories and cuddles with the childminder, interacting and taking part. All children excitedly play with the trays of pasta and rice. Learning to fill pots, measure, make shakers and exploring textures. Children learning to walk are encouraged and supported by the childminder as appropriate equipment is provided to help develop this skill.

They happily take part in outings outside the home such as; visits to the local park, zoo or Mersea beach. They play well together, take turns and appear caring towards one another. Requests from children for music are full field as the childminder sets up a music system outdoors. Children enjoy jumping and dancing on the trampoline whilst listening to their favourite songs and audio stories. There is very good selection of toys that are of good quality available to the children, however the opportunity to explore treasure baskets and heuristic play is still being developed.

The childminder has developed a good system to record the children's development using observations and photographs. Children's progress and achievements are documented within their own files. A selection of their art work is also kept and these are offered to parents every month and invite comment. They have their photograph on their coat pegs and this creates a real sense of belonging. Children gain independence and confidence as they initiate their own play and self-select resources.

It is evident that children feel and are safe within the childminder's care. They are reminded and are beginning to understand about keeping themselves safe. The childminder emphasises the importance of this when out walking, discussing road safety. A fire evacuation plan is displayed for the children and is available to the parents. The childminder is considering arranging a visit from the fire brigade so that the children can meet a fire officer and see a fire engine, giving them a better understanding.

Snacks and healthy meals that are nutritious are offered. For example, children are offered wedges of orange and bread sticks for snacks, even very young children are given the opportunity to make a choice. Appropriate equipment such as high chairs are in place.

Effective use of praise and encouragement enables children's self-esteem to develop and children are confident and secure in their environment. Children are able to develop skills for the future as they have opportunities to access some technology, such as programmable toys and a computer. They look at books which portray the wider world and develop social skills when they attend toddler groups and meet with other children. Opportunities to learn about other people's cultures

and differing needs are promoted well and positive images and resources depicting differences are available to the children.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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

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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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