

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY348693
Inspection date	04/03/2011
Inspector	Lynn Smith
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 2007. She lives with her partner and two children aged nine and eleven years in Colchester. The whole of the property is used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. The family has a dog, two cats and three guinea pigs as pets.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. There are currently six children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage, all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The childminder also offers care to children aged over five years. She is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder 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's welfare, learning and development needs are effectively met through the childminder's working practices. She demonstrates secure knowledge of the children in her care and works effectively with their parents to identify and accommodate their individual requirements. The childminder is beginning to embrace all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage and has some systems in place for observing and recording children's progress. Systems to enable the childminder to effectively review and evaluate her provision are in their infancy.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the organisation of the setting by developing the use of self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- improve the use of observational assessment to plan to meet children's individual needs and to provide experiences appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates good knowledge of safeguarding issues and her responsibilities with regards to protecting the children in her care. She updates her knowledge through regular training courses and keeps on file a comprehensive list of appropriate contact numbers to use, should she need to refer any concerns to the appropriate authority. All adults living on the premises are suitably vetted and proof of their clearance is available for parents to view. The childminder conducts some basic risk assessments of her home to ensure that she provides a safe environment for children.

Since the childminder's last inspection, she has completed the Diploma in Homes Based Childcare and a number of other training courses. She has used the reflective practice techniques encouraged through current training to review her provision and to make any necessary changes which provide improvements for children. At present, however, her self-evaluation processes are not well-documented or evidenced.

The childminder is firmly committed to providing children with a fully inclusive childminding provision. She has a range of toys and resources which reflect diversity and equality of opportunity and actively encourages children to engage in conversations about other people's differing needs and requirements. She knows the families she provides care for well and talks confidently about their backgrounds and cultures. Children have access to a huge range of toys and play materials which are well-stored and presented in a ground floor room. The childminder assists children in their access to resources which are out of their reach, but generally they are able to self-select and make clear choices about their play. The childminder is actively on hand at all times to support and aid the children. She sits with them when they play with floor toys and follows their interests when they are exploring the exciting areas of the childminder's garden.

The childminder has an open and relaxed relationship with parents of the children she cares for. She converses daily with them, sharing relevant information about their children's day and activities they have participated in. She writes a daily diary for the younger children, detailing their achievements and daily routines. Some of the children being cared for by the childminder attend more than one early years setting. The childminder is beginning to develop systems to enable her to work in partnership with these provisions.

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

Children thoroughly enjoy their time with the childminder. They are actively engaged in play throughout their day and enjoy the company of both the

childminder and the other children being cared for. They have fun using a play tent as a den to hide away in. Their game is adapted slightly by the childminder who sees that this play is becoming a little boisterous and provides a pop up tunnel for them to crawl through instead. Roars of giggles are heard coming from the tunnel as the children chase each other in and out of it. The exciting garden lures children's interests and they quickly dress to play outside on a very sunny but cold day. They have fun exploring the various different areas of the childminder's long garden, eventually making it to the very end where they find the family's pet cat. They enjoy playing in the wooden play house and climbing the stairs to the higher level with the assistance of the childminder. The childminder provides children with a well-balanced range of planned and child-initiated play experiences. Her planning is generally based around a theme but adapted and altered in line with the children's interests. She makes some very basic observations of the children's learning and achievements in the children's daily diaries, however, these are not currently being used to effectively link to specific areas of learning or to identify children's next steps in learning.

Children develop a good understanding about keeping healthy and well as they enter into lively discussions with the childminder and older children being cared for. They are provided with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks and the childminder encourages them to drink fresh water throughout the day to remain well-hydrated. Children are encouraged to develop good hygiene procedures such as hand washing before eating meals and when they have returned from outdoor play. Children are fit and active and have very good opportunities to participate in outdoor play on a daily basis. Children behave in ways which demonstrate that they feel safe and secure within the childminder's home. They are settled and move confidently around her home. They approach her with ease and enjoy her company. They show no concern when strangers enter the premises as they are well-supported and reassured by the childminder.

Children's self-esteem is very actively promoted and developed by the childminder who speaks to them in a calm and caring way. She offers positive praise and encouragement and helps them to become strong independent young people. Children are actively encouraged to make choices even from a young age. Children are well-behaved and enjoy playing together. The toys, resources and activities offered to children on a daily basis enables them to develop sound skills for the future. For example, they participate in a wide range of creative play, freely accessing the play materials and making firm choices about what equipment they are going to use. They practice mark making and move on to emergent writing as the childminder provides them with an extensive range of drawing and writing materials which they are encouraged to freely access. They develop a love of books as the childminder presents an interesting selection at their height. She also takes children to the local library to encourage them to make choices and develop a further interest in pre-reading.

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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