

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/03/2012
Inspector	Jenny Howell
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 has been registered since 2007. She lives with her husband and three adult children in a residential area of Brentwood, Essex. All areas of the ground floor are used for childminding, with the first floor used by sleeping children. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outdoor play. This is accessed via steps from the rear of the house. The childminder works with her daughter as a co-minder.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and also on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of six children under the age of eight at any one time. When working with a co-minder she is able to increase this number to nine children. The childminder is currently caring for 14 children in total, providing part-time, full-time and out of school care. Of these children, 10 are in the early years age range.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

All children are cared for in an extremely safe and secure environment. Space, resources and daily routines are carefully organised to fully meet the needs of individual children. As a result, children become fully engaged in stimulating activities which support them in making extremely good progress in their learning and development. Excellent relationships with parents, and other professionals, help the childminder to get to know children well and to share all relevant information effectively. A strong system of self-evaluation is in place to support continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing the outdoor environment to support all aspects of children's development all year round.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Highly effective safeguarding procedures are in place. The childminder and her co-minder have both attended training in child protection and have a wide range of guidance and supporting documentation to hand if needed. Thorough and

comprehensive procedures are followed to monitor and assess safety, including very detailed risk assessments. These cover all areas of the premises, as well as, all types of outing. Regular updates take place, including when new children join. All safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and stair gates, are in place and are checked on a regular basis. Current training in first aid is in place, allowing the childminder to act quickly in the event of an accident or emergency. A complete first aid kit is kept close to hand at all times.

The childminder has a highly effective system of self-evaluation in place. This effectively supports her in reflecting upon what she is doing well and the impact that this has upon children. Through this the childminder also identifies areas in which she could improve outcomes for children. The recommendation raised at the last inspection has been thoroughly addressed, bringing about improvements to children's safety. Parents' views are actively sought both on an informal basis and through annual questionnaires. The childminder continues to improve and develop her skills, through regular training and has achieved a level 3 qualification in home-based childcare. The childminder establishes extremely positive relationships with parents. She ensures a regular exchange of information through a variety of methods including daily chats, diaries, and regular access to scrap books and development records. All relevant parental permissions are obtained, ensuring that the childminder can care for children in line with parents' wishes. Parents give extremely positive feedback about the childminder. They feel that their children are happy and very well cared for. They like the variety of food provided and the childminder's kind, but firm, approach to managing behaviour. Effective relationships with other professionals, such as, pre-school staff ensure that a regular exchange of all relevant information is established and maintained.

The childminder makes extremely good use of space and resources. She ensures that all children are able to freely access different types of play, through effective use of low-level storage baskets. Children have full use of a dedicated play room, as well as, being able to use other areas of the house to rest, relax or complete homework in peace. Children have regular access to the garden throughout most of the year and frequent use is made of a range of local facilities, such as, the park, library and children's farm, to enhance play and learning.

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

Children are cared for in a well organised and stimulating environment. They see their photographs and art work on display all around them, making them feel welcome and valued. The learning environment is calm and peaceful with children engaged in play and learning at all times. Children are extremely well supported by the childminder who is very attentive to their changing needs. They sleep in line with their own routines and have their welfare needs, such as nappy changes, carefully attended to. The childminder is highly positive and encouraging as she interacts with children, helping to build confidence and independence. Detailed records are kept of children's progress and development. The childminder takes careful note of what children can do and uses this information to track their progress in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is used to plan and

provide activities which help children make excellent progress towards all areas of learning, based on their individual interests and starting points. Each day is carefully organised to provide children with a good balance of structured and informal learning opportunities, with flexibility built in to ensure that children can follow their own interests.

Children demonstrate great enjoyment as they fully engage in a wide range of stimulating and relevant activities. They develop strong social skills as they work together to build a tower or make pretend cups of tea for each other. Children have a wide range of opportunities to express their creativity. They paint, collage and model with play-dough, as well as exploring rhythm and sound with musical instruments. Children show great interest in the world around them. They make observations about new things and ask questions to make sense of how things work. Children learn about nature by feeding ducks, growing fruit and vegetables or visiting a local children's farm.

Children develop strong skills for the future. They are confident working with numbers mentally as they work out how many girls and boys are present and what the difference will be when more children arrive after school. Children access the computer to research using the internet or find pictures which support their interests and ideas. Children also develop a good range of practical skills. They regularly cook, both sweet and savoury dishes, including fruit flan, pizza and biscuits. Children's literacy skills are well supported. They have plentiful opportunities to write in context, for example, when making Mother's Day cards. They develop a love of books and reading as they visit the library and enjoy interactive stories.

Children are extremely well supported in adopting healthy lifestyles. They remember to wash their hands before eating and talk confidently about the reasons for doing so. Children play and exercise outside on a daily basis. They climb, slide and ride on the range of play equipment provided in the garden. Further physical skills are developed as they visit the local parks and swimming pool or enjoy singing and dancing to action rhymes with their friends. Children enjoy a wide variety of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided with every meal and frequent drinks are supplied.

Children behave extremely well. They show high levels of respect and take account of the needs of others. They pass toys to babies and show concern when others are hurt. Children remember to say please and thank you without reminders and congratulate others for their achievements, for example, winning a game. A wide range of books and toys support children in learning about difference and diversity. They talk about life in different countries and investigate world festivals through practical activities such as flag making or cooking. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they regularly practise the fire drill or dress as fire and police officers to stimulate discussions about people who help them. Children feel extremely safe and secure in the care of the childminder. They move freely around the home and are confident to ask for help. Children enjoy cuddles as they wake up and laugh and giggle together as they play.

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	1

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	1
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	1
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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