

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/01/2012
Inspector	Janet Uwins
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 2011. She lives with her husband and two children, aged nine and four years, in the Shoeburyness area of Southend-on-Sea, Essex, where the whole of the premises is used for childminding. The childminder walks or drives to a local school and pre-school to take and collect children. She takes children to the library, park, beach and toddler groups. The family keep a pet rabbit and a tortoise.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children under eight years, of whom two may be in the early years age range. She is also registered on 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.

The childminder has a high level of awareness of each child's needs because she works closely with their parents and carers. The childminder provides a broad range of activities and experiences to promote children's learning and development in the setting and in the wider community. Children feel safe and secure and play happily because the childminder has established thorough safeguarding systems. The childminder is fully committed to improving her practice and regularly evaluates her provision for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop observations of the children further to help identify their interests and support next steps in their learning and development
- strengthen the established partnerships with parents by encouraging them to contribute towards their children's learning journey folders.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded and protected very well because the childminder has a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures. She has attended safeguarding training and is familiar with the appropriate contact details should she have concerns about a child. Daily risk assessments are carried out and recorded in the entire setting and prior to outings and visits. Resources are regularly cleaned using a rota system devised by the childminder that ensures all toys are included. All adult members of the family are vetted, this means that

children are protected well. Records of accidents and incidents, evacuation drills, medication and attendance are well maintained and supported by a wide range of written policies.

A wide range of age-appropriate resources is available from which children self-select and initiate their own play. The resources reflect diversity, for example in puzzles and different dolls. The childminder has charted when different festivals are celebrated throughout the year and found some activities related to them to try. The childminder is skilful in her interaction with children, gently extending their learning with encouragement and realistic effective challenge. She has attended training in the Early Years Foundation Stage and recently started to compile children's learning journeys that link with the areas of learning. However, development of observations to identify children's interests and inform planning effectively is not fully developed although the childminder is aware of this.

The childminder has formed strong and positive relationships with parents. She exchanges information with parents daily and communicates with them through text messaging. For example, parents inform her when children have enjoyed an activity or outing. Parents praise the childminder's provision by confirming that their children feel happy and 'at home' in the childminder's care. Although comprehensive information is given by parents on the registration form, they do not yet contribute towards the children's learning journey folders. The childminder shows a high level of awareness of the diversity of children's home lives and respects this by ensuring that children have familiar comfort objects and food to help them settle. Good partnerships have been formed with local community groups including the school and pre-school that children attend.

The childminder has recently completed a comprehensive self assessment form which identifies her strengths and areas for development. She is fully committed to improving her provision and sets herself realistic targets for example she has begun to compile questionnaires for parents to complete that give their views and suggestions about the setting.

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

Children enjoy their time with the childminder and settle happily because she knows them well and has formed very good relationships with them. They excitedly choose what they want to play with and the childminder encourages their language development and imagination through her interaction. For example, when children make a spaceship out of connecting tubes she makes smaller ones and they talk about 'smaller' and 'bigger' and travel through space together. This helps build children's self-esteem and confidence. Older children enjoy cooking activities and make pizzas. Children learn about the wider world on visits to the library, the beach, fire station, pet shop and a farm. They are highly motivated because the childminder knows them well and provides experiences and strategies that stimulate their interest, curiosity and critical thinking. This helps them to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children develop an awareness of their own safety because the childminder is vigilant and ensures that the environment is safe. For example stair gates are fitted to restrict areas and safety locks are fitted to kitchen cupboard and drawers. The childminder reinforces the importance of safety through her language with the children, for example by explaining that they cannot put their hands in the drawer because there are sharp knives in there. Children know their boundaries and routines and behave well.

Children are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles and choose their fruit for snack from child-level posters in the kitchen. The childminder skilfully uses this opportunity to discuss other choices, and the colours and names of fruit. Older children make healthy choices from the breakfast menu that includes cereals, fruit and yoghurt before they are taken to school. House rules are displayed around the setting to remind children of the importance of hand washing and the childminder reinforces this verbally. Children have their own flannels and towels. They know where the tissues are kept for wiping their nose and ask for them independently when needed. Playing with the doctor's set and looking after sick dolls helps children to understand they sometimes need care and medicine when feeling unwell. The outdoor area is safe and used in all weathers to allow children free access to play in the fresh air and exercise their large muscles.

Children develop a good sense of belonging in the childminder's care. They feel emotionally secure by having familiar objects with them from home and enjoy cuddles and snuggling in with the childminder for a story. Children share toys well and behaviour is good because the childminder consistently uses positive reinforcement to praise good behaviour. Children form good relationships with each other and the childminder's children who are positive role models for them. This helps them to understand that others have feelings.

The childminder's questioning during role play encourages thinking and language development for communication. For example on a visit to the beach, she asks what else might be there as well as the sand. When putting out a fire she asks where the water is and children explain that it comes out of the hose that is joined to the fire engine. Children's independence is therefore encouraged well and their growing confidence is well supported.

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	3
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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