

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	125142
Inspection date	20/10/2009
Inspector	Lara Hickson

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 1989. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Gravesend, Kent. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She currently has two children on roll, both of whom are in the early years age group. The family has two pet cats.

The childminder can support children with special educational needs. She is a member of the National Childminding Association (NCMA).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder demonstrates an extremely professional approach to childminding and uses self evaluation systems effectively to update and improve her childminding practices further. This successfully improves outcomes for children. The childminder's capacity to improve is clearly shown through her commitment to updating her qualifications and through the thorough completion of previous recommendations. Children are extremely happy and settled within the childminder's warm, friendly, family orientated setting. An extensive range of activities are available that interest and challenge children, enabling them to develop to their full potential. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to support children's welfare and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Excellent working partnerships with parents enable the childminder to involve them in their children's learning and meet the needs of each individual child.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the written safeguarding policy to include the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against the childminder or a member of the family.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Effective procedures are in place to ensure children's safety within the provision. The home setting is safe and secure and equipment is used effectively to minimise hazards, for example safety gates restrict access to the kitchen and first floor. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and are reviewed periodically to

ensure risks are kept to a minimum. The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures and of the referral process with regards to reporting any incidents of abuse or neglect. Although a child protection statement is in operation it does not clearly highlight the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against the childminder or a member of her family. Excellent arrival and collection systems further ensure children's safety, for example children will not be released to an unauthorised person. The childminder shows a very good understanding about how to help children to feel and keep safe. For example, she offers additional support to a child who can become unsettled at unfamiliar faces and after a few minutes he confidently approaches the unfamiliar inspector.

The childminder demonstrates a positive approach towards equality and diversity. Resources are accessible and available for all children as age and stage appropriate and include a wide range depicting positive images of diversity. The childminder liaises with parents to ensure that children's cultural and linguistic needs are met and positively embraces children's differences. For example, if a child speaks an additional language within their home setting the childminder requests some key words and phrases to support children with their communication. Systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The childminder's capacity to improve is excellent and systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the setting, for example through the self evaluation form, parent questionnaires and from regular liaison with other childminders. The childminder demonstrates an extremely positive attitude towards ongoing training and personal development. It is evident from discussions that she has a clear understanding of how her setting will progress and continue to improve outcomes for the children attending. The childminder has fully embraced the Early Years Foundation Stage and feels that there is always room for improvement.

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

The childminder knows the children in her care extremely well and plans for their individual stages of development. She has developed an excellent observation system to record how the children are progressing. This includes photographic evidence, areas of learning covered and the next steps of development. The childminder uses these observations to develop individual plans for children which enables her to offer activities and experiences that provide sufficient interest and challenge. Extremely effective systems are in place for sharing information with parents regarding progress and development. Daily feedback is exchanged both verbally and through a written contact book. Observation folders with photographic evidence are available for parents to look through at any time and the childminder has regular discussions with parents regarding their children's on going progress. The childminder also completes a short review each month which covers the children's progress in the six areas of learning as well as future learning intentions. This enables parents to be fully involved in their child's care, learning and development. Parents are extremely happy with the service provided as reflected in parent questionnaires and thank you cards the childminder has received.

Comments from parents include 'very thorough, verbal briefings every evening', 'provides an excellent service that is very personal' and 'our child yelps with excitement as he arrives each morning'.

The childminder provides children with a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities and experiences which help them make excellent progress across all areas of their learning. The childminder plans her day effectively to ensure that individual routines and requirements are met in full consultation with parents. This ensures that children feel secure within the setting and are happy and settled. The childminder organises settling-in sessions with all new children to enable each child to become familiar with her, other children attending and her home setting. This also gives her the opportunity to gather information from parents on children's individual needs as well as their starting points so that she can plan age and stage appropriate activities.

The childminder encourages children to become independent, creative learners by providing a wide range of resources and activities children can choose from. Resources and furniture are available at a low level and are easily accessible allowing individual choice. A balance of both adult-led and child-initiated activities are planned into the daily routine with clear periods of free play. The childminder sits on the floor with children and supports their play and learning. For example, when a child fixes simple puzzles together she encourages the child, prompting if required. She also uses this activity to extend vocabulary by introducing different objects and their colour. Activities and outings in the local area enhance children's enjoyment and progress, such as visits to the library, parks and walks along the promenade to feed the swans. After a recent visit to the park to collect leaves, conkers and acorns one child investigates whether conkers and acorns are able to go down the ball run. The childminder supports the child further by helping him find additional objects in the toy box that will fit down the ball run.

The childminder has a valid paediatric first aid qualification ensuring that appropriate first aid is given in the event of an accident or emergency. Any accidents, however minor are recorded in an accident book and parents are asked to sign any entries relating to their child as confirmation that they have been informed. All medication administered to minded children is accurately recorded and authorised by parents. The childminder has comprehensive health and safety procedures in place to minimise the spread of infection in her setting. She encourages children to develop an awareness of their own personal hygiene from an early age, for example, children wipe their hands and use anti bacterial spray before eating and she explains that this is 'to get rid of any germs'.

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

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	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	2
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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met