

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	21/05/2010
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori
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 November 2003. She lives with her husband and two children aged nine and six years in Staplehurst. All areas of the property are used for childminding apart from the main bedroom. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered for on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare register. She may care for five children under eight years of whom three may be in the early years age group. She currently has four children under eight years on roll including two in the early years age group. She also cares for two children who are over eight years.

The family have a cat, who tends to stay outside most of the day. Shops are within walking distance, as is a playing field. 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 provides children with a warm, welcoming and child-centred environment in which to play and learn. She very effectively identifies their individual personalities and developmental needs. She also has a good understanding of the strengths of her practice and the potential areas for development, enabling her to provide a service which is constantly evolving to meet the needs of its users. All required documentation is in place and is generally appropriately maintained. The childminder also has very positive partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals involved with the children, ensuring continuity and consistency of care.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the quality of some written records. Specifically, improve the clarity of medication records and ensure that accident records are fully confidential and do not include the name of any children other than the person to whom the record relates
- extend written records of risk assessments to show how risks are managed to reflect the needs of individual children
- increase the focus on promoting children's understanding of diversity through adult led activities

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded as the childminder fully understands her duty to protect them from harm and has completed child protection training. She is confident in her ability to detect the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and provides parents with a copy of her safeguarding policy and procedure. She demonstrates a good knowledge of the developmental abilities of all of the children in her care and skilfully implements appropriate safety precautions. She has completed the required written risk assessments although these have a tendency to be generic and do not fully reflect the good practices in place to meet children's individual needs. Children are extremely well supervised in order to ensure that they feel safe and secure. In addition, adults within the household are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability.

The childminder organises her home to create a very welcoming and stimulating environment. Children have access to an impressive range of resources and enjoy very regular opportunities to choose the activities they wish to take part in. The childminder plans very effectively, providing children with an extremely good range of activities which they thoroughly enjoy. Her calm, patient and very good humoured manner supports children to develop very good, sociable behaviour. Children's individual personalities and abilities are given extremely high regard ensuring that they receive care which is specifically designed to reflect their very individual needs. The childminder has some resources that promote positive images of diversity and plans activities which reflect a range of special days such as St George's day. However, this is an area where she does not have a wealth of knowledge and therefore it receives slightly less focus than other aspects of her provision.

The childminder maintains all of the required records and documentation and these are generally well ordered and comprehensive. However, the records relating to accidents sometimes include the names of other children which does not offer sufficient confidentiality. In addition, a small number of the medication records lack clarity. All parents are provided with good quality information about all aspects of the service offered. The childminder has a strong commitment to ongoing training and continual development and effectively evaluates her practices to identify areas for improvement. She regularly completes observations of children to help her to determine the next steps in their learning. She maintains records of these to share with parents and carers to keep them informed of their child's progress and to encourage them to contribute their own ideas. She also maintains daily contact diaries and takes time each day to chat as children are dropped off and collected. The childminder also communicates effectively with other professionals involved in providing care for the children.

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

Children are extremely happy and settled in the childminder's care. They display a strong sense of belonging, confidently approaching her for attention, instigating conversations and choosing the toys they want to play with. They feel valued as the childminder listens with genuine interests to what they have to say and constantly seeks their views and opinions. As a result they learn to make decisions and are becoming very independent in their learning.

Children are provided with a very good range of activities which cover all areas of their development. They are particularly well supported to develop their understanding of the natural world as they investigate nature and sow and tend fruit and vegetables in the garden. The childminder also makes good use of spontaneous opportunities to extend children's knowledge and understanding. For instance, during a very enjoyable game of magnetic fishing, she took time to point out the defining features of different creatures including octopuses and seahorses. Children also have very regular opportunities to express themselves creatively and to practice their writing and pre-writing skills. Activities such as construction and junk modelling are also available to encourage children to problem solve and to become resourceful. The childminder very skilfully introduces number and mathematical understanding into everyday situations such as counting how many pieces of orange are in the bowl and recounting once one has been eaten.

The childminder promotes children's good health very effectively and helps them to understand the importance of developing healthy lifestyles. She supports them to learn about good nutrition and ensures that drinks are available to them at all times. In addition, she encourages children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. The childminder maintains a valid first aid qualification making her capable of treating children in case of a minor accident. Her home is very clean and she takes good steps to ensure the children in her care remain healthy and free from cross-infection. Children very regularly play in the fresh air and also have access to a broad range of activities aimed at promoting their physical development. They are learning to throw, bat and kick balls as well as using ride-on cars and climbing equipment.

Overall children are developing very good self-esteem as a result of the high level of care and attention they receive. They are regularly taken to groups to mix with other children and are becoming very sociable. This, together with practical skills such as using computers, helps to prepare them for the transition into school.

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	3
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	3
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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