

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	141134
Inspection date	29/04/2010
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt

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 1992. She lives with her husband and adult son in a house in Gillingham, Dorset. The childminder occasionally works with an assistant. All ground floor areas of the house are used for childminding, which includes toilet facilities. Sleeping facilities are provided on the first floor. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of six children under the age of eight may attend at any one time, when the childminder is working alone, of whom three may be in the early years age range. When working with an assistant, a maximum of six children may attend, of whom four may be in the early years age range. There are currently nine children on roll, of whom six are in the early years age range. The childminder also cares for children over the age of eight.

The childminder holds a National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development. She is a member of the National Childminding Association and a local childminding group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a well organised, safe and homely environment where they are involved in a good range of activities, both inside and out. The childminder knows them well as individuals, which enables her to meet their needs well. Effective communication between the childminder and parents contributes towards children making good progress in their learning and development. The childminder uses good methods to evaluate her provision, and is committed to developing her role to ensure continuous improvement in the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the system for recording existing injuries is used consistently to fully promote children's safety in the event of concerns
- continue to develop the observation, assessment and planning system, by making observations more focused to clearly identify the appropriate next step.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder organises her home well to meet the needs of all the children in her care. She provides a calm and caring environment where children are made to feel at home. The childminder implements clear policies and procedures to promote children's welfare and safety. She completes detailed risk assessments to ensure that children play in a safe environment, both in the home and when on outings. The childminder has a good understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedure to follow if there are concerns. She updates her knowledge regularly, which contributes to protecting children from harm. However, she does not consistently record existing injuries to protect children fully in the case of concerns. All the required records to promote children's welfare are in place, completed clearly and stored confidentially.

Children access a good range of play equipment, which is arranged so that they can make spontaneous choices and extend their own play. The childminder makes good use of local facilities to enhance children's learning. For example, regular visits to a toddler group promote children's social skills and enables them to use an extended range of equipment. Children develop an open attitude to people's differences through the childminder's good example, and as they use resources that reflect positive images of diversity.

The childminder promotes positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents receive good information about the setting by way of written policies and procedures, and a portfolio providing background information about the childminder. The childminder offers daily opportunities for sharing verbal information in order to meet individual needs. A two-way diary supports this for children under two years to ensure their routines are respected. The childminder is aware of her responsibility to share information with other settings that the children attend.

The childminder has addressed the recommendation set at the last inspection, which has improved aspects of children's awareness of the wider world. She has effective systems in place to evaluate her practice, which include belonging to a local quality assurance scheme, reading early years publications and sharing ideas for good practice with other childminders. The childminder is committed to developing her role to ensure improvement in the children's experiences. She is in the process of earning a childminding network accreditation, which involves meeting specific criteria and high standards.

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

Children are happy, settled and secure in the care of their childminder. She provides a calm and caring atmosphere in which the children play happily and develop confidence. Children make good relationships with the childminder and other children then meet during their time with her. For example, young children

demonstrate their affection for the childminder with hugs and kisses. Children behave well. They know what to expect through familiar routines. They learn to share and take turns, be polite and to display good manners. Children receive regular praise and encouragement for effort and achievement, which helps boost their self-esteem.

Children are involved in a good range of activities over time, both inside and out. They develop language and communication skills to make their needs known and organise their play. Books and stories provide a valuable means of encouraging vocabulary and discussion about feelings. Children have various opportunities for practising mark making and expressing their ideas through art and craft. Regular visits to different groups extend children's access to materials to explore and investigate, such as dry oats, paints or custard. Children learn to count and recognise colours and shapes through play, such as finding a 'red car' and identifying 'how many animals are on the train'. Walks in the local area encourage young children's curiosity about the outdoor environment, for instance, watching animals or appreciating the beauty of blossoming trees. They learn about changes in nature as they plant seeds for themselves and understand that plants need water and sunshine to grow.

Overall, the childminder has a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn through play. She compiles individual files for each child, which provides a record of their time with the childminder and their progress. The childminder records observations of children's play and achievements to assess their stage of development and plan their next step. She is developing a more secure knowledge of the guidance materials to aid planning. However, there are occasions when the observations are not specific enough to provide effective information for planning the appropriate next step. The childminder knows each child well as an individual and interacts positively in their play, which helps them solve problems, suggest ideas and develop an understanding of the world around them.

Children's health is well promoted. From a young age, they learn good procedures for their own personal hygiene, such as washing hands before handling food and shielding their mouth when coughing. They start to make healthy choices in what they eat from food provided mainly from home. Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They often visit play parks where they practise large muscle skills on equipment such as swings, slides and climbing frames. When playing in the garden they explore sand, play ball games and manoeuvre wheeled vehicles. Children learn about aspects of their own safety when they are out and about as they start to understand safe procedures for crossing roads and how to use equipment sensibly. They know what to expect in an emergency in the home because they are involved in regular practises of the escape plan.

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	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	3
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	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

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