

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/02/2011
Inspector	Jenny Kane
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 2001. She lives with her husband and two school age children aged in the Shorndcliffe area of Folkestone. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding. Children have access to a secure enclosed rear garden for outside play. Schools, pre-schools, toddler groups, shops and parks are within walking distance. The family has a pet rabbit and a guinea pig.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of four children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding seven children, four of whom are in the early years age group and three between the ages of five and ten years. All children attend on a part-time basis.

She is a member of an approved childminding network and currently receives early education funding for three and four year olds. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. She holds a level 3 qualification in childcare attends the local childminder support group and 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 children enjoy a good relationship with the childminder who has a clear understanding about their individual backgrounds. She is qualified, experienced and has a good understanding of child development and learning through play. Safeguarding of the children is high priority and partnerships with parents are a main strength of her service. She has clearly identified the areas in which she wants to progress, self-evaluation is effective in helping to raise standards and she demonstrates a good ability to continually improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of the written assessments so they inform the planning
- support children's knowledge and understanding of the world by offering more opportunities for them to celebrate multicultural festivals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder demonstrates an excellent understanding of her responsibilities with regard to child protection, is confident about raising concerns and has attended recent training. Her safeguarding policy is fully explained and shared with parents so they are fully aware of her role. The childminder pays very good attention to children's safety; she is constantly monitoring the space, knows where the children are and involves all children in helping to keep their environment safe. As a result, children in her care are safe and secure at all times and this is reflected in their confidence and high standards of behaviour. She uses thorough written risk assessments to identify areas of risk and quickly removes broken toys ready for repair. All adults who come into contact with the children are suitably vetted. The childminder keeps a record of visitors and has an effective collecting children procedure in place. All these measures ensure she safeguards all children in her care well.

The childminder is very well organised and makes excellent use of the available space, which is used to full advantage. The children freely choose what they do, confidently selecting from the wide range of good quality toys available. These are attractively displayed, clearly labelled and help to provide a stimulating environment, which is very conducive to children's learning. As storage is tight, the childminder has photographed her resources and made laminated cards. This helps to remind children what they can ask for and helps the younger children to be fully involved in decision making regarding activities. Children are learning about recycling and sustainability. In the garden they plant vegetables; they help to look after the pets and save suitable scraps for the rabbit and guinea pig. Children are confident and outgoing. This is largely due to the childminder's good organisational skills.

The childminder has developed good links with other providers such as teaching staff at the school and other local childminders. She fully understands the benefits of working with other settings and professionals. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. She has established excellent relationships with all parents, clear daily communication, both verbal and in writing, ensure parents are fully involved in all aspects of their children's care. Her high quality policies and procedures are shared with parents ensuring they are well informed about her childminding service. Contact books, which hold information about daily activities and progress, are in use and these back up the verbal discussions. They go home with the child on a daily basis. The childminder is very keen to establish parent's views and opinions. This is achieved through regular feedback, the contact books and questionnaires. These have established that parents are very happy with the service through their many positive comments. The childminder also takes on board suggestions and ideas from the children. Much of the planning of activities is child-led and they are very involved in decision-making.

The childminder has a positive approach to her self-development and training. She has several years experience of working with young children and a good knowledge of how children develop through play. Although qualified, she is keen to

further her knowledge and does this by attending childminding meetings and accessing short workshops and courses. She has established a good support network with other local childminders and this is beneficial for emergencies and joint outings. She also receives good support from her network coordinator and other childminder's in the network. Previous recommendations have been fully addressed and she has made several further improvements, which she has identified through her self-evaluation. She is very aware of using reflective practice and is committed to making ongoing improvements to her service.

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

The childminder has a good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. She provides a range of suitable and interesting activities which support children's learning and their future skills. The childminder uses observations to monitor children's achievements. She is aware of their starting points through good discussion and information sharing with parents. The children's development folders show they are making good progress but the written assessments do not always show children's next steps in their learning. These folders are regularly looked at by the parents and along with the contact books help them to be fully involved in their children's welfare and learning.

Children clearly enjoy spending time with the childminder and her family. The childminder has a good awareness of equalities and inclusion. She is fully aware that all children develop at different rates and supports individual children well. She has previous experience of working with other professionals and parents to support children with additional needs. Children are valued and treated as individuals; they demonstrate high levels of independence and have very good social skills. Because they are included and involved fully in decision making, children show very high levels of self discipline and behaviour. Children learn about good personal hygiene practices through discussion and example. They excitedly explain that recently on an outing they were able to touch some tiny piglets and understand why they needed to wash their hands after this experience. They are developing healthy eating habits through the childminder's provision of well balanced snacks and enjoy cooking activities. Drinks are readily available and older children help themselves to drinks and help in the preparation of snacks. For continuity of care, the childminder tries to keep routines close to those at home and records sleep patterns, nappy changes and dietary details in the contact books.

Children communicate well and demonstrate good cooperation and understanding of sharing. There is a good supply of books and labelling of the resources and some areas help children to recognise the written word. Children enjoy drawing and mark-making and have access to a good supply of art and craft materials. There are good opportunities to use mathematics during play and there is a good range of games, puzzles, construction materials. Children all play together with the magnetic game where they link pieces together to make a structure which extends the length of the room. The older children help younger ones to count how many

bits there are. The younger children have a good concept of colour identifying red, yellow, green and blue pieces. During snack two children talk about the number freeze on wall and count that there are six penguins and eight chickens, chatting while they eat. Children gain an understanding of the wider world and the local community during nature walks, on way to school and when they go on outings. They have access to a range of resources which show positive images and diversity. However, as yet they do not celebrate many multi-cultural festivals. Children have access to a computer, some electronic games and a digital camera.

Children have many opportunities to be creative and use their imaginations. For example, they have recently all helped to make and paint a cardboard car and various road signs to go with it. They all want to sit in it and have to negotiate taking turns. Later in the morning children take the car into the garden helped by the older children who carry and set it up. The children's knowledge of road safety is enhanced by this project and they demonstrate this well during play as they act out scenarios using the traffic lights, stop signs and bollards. There are good opportunities for children to be physically active when they visit parks, toddler groups and animal centres. On outings the childminder is well organised and carries with her everything needed, including first aid supplies and details of all the children and herself. She risk assesses venues and only visits places which are safe and suitable. On these outings children develop a very good understanding of dangers and staying safe. They demonstrate a very high awareness of this during the inspection as they clear away toys, look after their environment and older children show a great deal of care for the younger children when playing. Children regularly practice fire drills ensuring they are clear about leaving the building safely.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
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	1

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	1
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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