

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 1992. She lives with her husband and teenage children in Folkestone. The ground floor of her 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 premises are accessed by a sloping drive and one step to the front door. The family has a pet dog and several cats.

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 six 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 five children in this age group on a part time basis.

The childminder regularly works with an assistant. 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 who speak English as an addition language. She holds a level three 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 childminder supports children well during play enabling them to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder has a professional approach and strives to provide an inclusive and welcoming service for children and their families. Partnerships with parents and carers are a main strength of her service and she is establishing sharing of information with other providers. The childminder is continuously seeking ways to develop and improve her service showing a good capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the sharing of written information with other providers to help transition
- develop further systems of observations so the assessment process is clear to parents.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is very well organised, has all mandatory paperwork in place; it is well maintained and stored safely. She has a good awareness of child protection issues, her safeguarding policy is shared with parents and they understand her responsibilities. Safety is high on the childminder's agenda; she ensures a safe environment by carrying out daily checks before children arrive and throughout the day. Her risk assessment covers indoors, the garden and outings. All adults and assistants are suitable to work with the children. She makes good use of the available resources and children benefit from a small playroom where they enjoy playing and self select from the cupboard and various boxes. Although the childminder is not currently caring for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities she has a good knowledge of issues and is confident about caring for children with a range of needs and abilities.

The childminder has established good verbal communication with other providers such as local childminders, school teachers and nursery workers. She is aware of the benefits of working with others but she is yet to establish a method of sharing written information where children attend other settings. The childminder's relationship with parents and carers is outstanding and a main strength of her service. Her good quality written information is shared with parents in several forms. This includes copies of all the policies. Other useful information is displayed in the hallways and the playroom. This includes information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, photographs and leaflets. She is very keen to find out parent's views and opinions and does this through verbal communication, questionnaires and the use of contact books. These contact books are in use for all children and hold very good information about activities, routines and progress. Parents are very happy with the service and as a result of the excellent communication, readily share important information about their children.

The childminder has a good commitment to her personal development and has recently embarked on a degree level course. This has helped her to increase her already good childcare knowledge. She uses self-evaluation to assess strengths and weaknesses of her service. She also receives good support from her network coordinator and other childminder's in the network. She has addressed the previous recommendations and has identified areas for herself in which she wants to improve. This is very much a family business with her mother and her daughter assisting as required.

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

The childminder provides a good range of activities which support children's learning and development. She aims to make these fun, interesting and plans around the abilities of each individual child. She has a good understanding of the early learning goals and as a result children are making good progress in relation

to their starting points. Her plans are clear and shared with parents. However, planning is flexible and she encourages children to be involved in what they do and to make suggestions about activities. The parents share information about their children's starting points and this helps the childminder to monitor their progress. She uses observations to plan the next steps for each child although parents are not fully involved with the assessment process. However, the childminder is skilled at making the written information interesting and uses photographs to enhance the observations. Parents regularly look at the development folders and this helps them to know how their children are progressing.

Children are happy and enjoy close relationships with the childminder and her family. They confidently approach the childminder when they need her help or attention. Their social skills are developing well and they benefit from visits to other childminders and local groups. Children show independence and are involved in decision making. The childminder has good strategies in place to deal with any challenging behaviour. She includes children in the planning of activities and they often suggest ideas for play. As a result, the children's behaviour is good. Children cooperate well during play particularly when the childminder joins in. Children have previously helped to paint a cardboard box which has become a post box. They have fun wearing the 'Postman Pat' uniforms and various hats. They use their imaginations well by putting chairs together to make 'Postman Pat's' van. One child goes to the kitchen and finds two circular trays for the wheels. Later they want to send a letter and find envelopes and pencils. The childminder helps by writing their names before they put them in the post box.

Children are clear communicators. They enjoy books and stories and visit the library on a regular basis to choose their own books. Several of the toy boxes are labelled helping children to identify familiar words. There are many opportunities to use mathematics during play, on outings and at snack time. When dressing up children want to look at themselves in the mirror. One side of the mirror enlarges and they have great fun comparing and talking about bigger and smaller while laughing at themselves. All the toys are readily available to all children. Several resources show positive images and diversity. The childminder has some dual language books and music tapes in Spanish. This helps inclusion. Children celebrate other festivals and discuss difference which helps their knowledge of the wider world. In addition, the childminder knows children's backgrounds very well which helps ensure she provides an equal opportunity service.

Children have good opportunities to partake in a range of physical activities on a daily basis. They enjoy walks in the local community, visiting parks and often walking to school. This helps their understanding of the need for fresh air and exercise. On these outings they learn about road safety and walking together. The childminder is very well organised and has everything ready in a bag. She also uses this when children practise fire drills. Children learn about good hygiene through the childminder's good example. The family have a new kitten which children like to touch. They know about using wipes to clean their hands after stroking the kitten. Before eating they know they wash their hands to get rid of germs, the childminder provides healthy snacks and drinks throughout the day. Children bring a packed lunch which is stored suitably until lunchtime and the children eat together at the low table. The childminder is aware of any particular dietary needs

or preferences and children often join in cooking activities.

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	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	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	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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