

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY246654
Inspection date	24/05/2011
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 2003. She lives with her husband and two adult sons in the village of Boughton under Blean, near Faversham. A two room extension on 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 cat.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered on her own to care for a maximum of six children under eight years, of whom not more than three may be in the early years age group, and of these, not more than one may be under one year at any one time. The childminder regularly works with an assistant and when doing so they may care for no more than 11 children under eight years of whom not more than six may be in the early years age group, and of these, not more than two may be under one year at any one time.

She is currently minding six children in the early years age group, all in part time places. She also offers care to nine children aged from five years to 11 years. The childminder supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The childminder 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 satisfactory.

The childminder works closely with parents and others to meet children's individual needs. Whilst the care of the children is good and their health and safety a priority, the planning and observations are not sufficiently developed to identify children's starting points or the next steps in their learning. Consequently children are making satisfactory progress. Most documentation is effectively maintained. Although the childminder does not yet have systems in place to monitor and assess the service she provides, she demonstrates a commitment to making 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 observation and assessment process to include all the required elements to ensure children's achievements are fully recorded, that parents are aware of these records and have regular access to them

- encourage children to develop their reading and mathematical skills through more labelling and visual signs
- review the written record of risk assessment to include more detail regarding outings
- develop systems of self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is reasonably well organised and the care and well-being of the children is her foremost priority. This is very much a family-run business, with family members helping with cooking, paperwork and assisting with the childcare. The childminder has a clear understanding and awareness of child protection; she and her assistant know how to safeguard children and she takes good steps to ensure children are safe in her care. She carries out daily checks of the premises and areas used including the garden to eliminate risk. However, her written record of risk assessment is rather limited, particularly the information about regular outings. Assistants and all other adults are vetted thoroughly and are suitable to work with the children.

Children have access to a good amount of toys and equipment, many of which reflect diversity. Resources are in good condition and cover all the areas of learning. The childminder works hard to provide a welcoming and homely environment suitable for the wide age range of children cared for. Children are becoming involved in growing plants, composting and recycling and the childminder is working towards sustainability. The childminder treats children as individuals, encourages them to look at differences, and she strives to provide a service which is welcoming, flexible and open to all families and their children.

The childminder has established good links with other providers, such as the local school where several children attend, and the local nursery where some of the pre-school children go. For example, daily discussions with teachers and nursery workers help the childminder to share information to support children's development. All the necessary mandatory records and documents are in place, kept confidently and securely. Children's records hold clear information, are readily available and are shared with parents. The childminder's relationship with parents is very good because of the good verbal input and commitment to flexibility. She and her assistant know all the parents and carers well. Consequently parents confidently share personal information which ensures good continuity and the meeting of individual children's care needs. Although there is written information about her service, some is rather limited. However, parents are very happy and make positive comments. They state they particularly like the communication, the flexibility, that fact that they feel they can share their views, and that they know how their children are progressing.

The childminder has a positive approach to her self-development and is keen to access more training to update her knowledge and skills. She does not yet use self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement. However, she demonstrates an

understanding of her strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been partially addressed. Although her plans for the future are not yet fully identified she shows a willingness to work together with others to bring about improvement to her service.

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

Children are happy, settled and content in their surroundings. They enjoy positive relationships with all adults involved in their care. The childminder provides suitable activities based around children's interests and developmental stage. Children with additional needs are supported well, and the childminder is confident about meeting the individual needs of all children; she works with the parents to find out as much as possible about their backgrounds and capabilities when they first start. The childminder's planning, observation and assessment systems are not effective in monitoring children's achievements. However, through her good verbal communication she is able to keep parents informed. Overall, the records show children are progressing satisfactorily towards the Early Learning Goals.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment which is welcoming and child friendly. There is plenty of space to move about and a free flow system onto the decking helps children to make independent choices about where they play. When going into the garden children learn to keep safe by holding the childminder's hand when going down the steps. Children are secure in their environment and move about happily and confidently. They practise fire drills and understand the house rules. The childminder has appropriate strategies in place to manage any unwanted behaviour. She is attentive to children's needs, interacts well and encourages them to make choices about the activities and what they do. As a result children's behaviour is good.

There are good opportunities for children to be physically active during the day. They enjoy outings in the local community, visits to toddler groups and walk to and from school each day. This helps their understanding of the importance of regular exercise to keep healthy. On these outings children walk together safely and learn about road safety. The childminder only visits places which are suitable but her risk assessment is limited for some of the venues. She is well organised and carries good emergency supplies. When playing in the garden children make the most of the space and the toys. They enjoy playing in the sand tray where they measure and pour the sand talking about colour, feel and texture.

Children are developing good communication skills and the childminder encourages speech by talking to them during play. Books and mark making are available, some work is displayed on the walls and children know how to ask for different toys as they have cards with the name and photograph to help identify additional resources. Children enjoy a matching game where they identify items which go with each other. They sort these and discuss with the childminder what they find. For example, the football matches the boots while the saucepan goes with the cooker. Children are very pleased when they have finished all the cards and display

them proudly. However, there are very few labels and visual signs to help children recognise number and word. Children show their creativity through dressing up, roll play and action songs. They have a lovely time dancing to music, listening to the instructions and pretending to be animals. One song is about horses and the children quickly go to the rocking horses, climb on and rock, making neighing noises.

Children clearly show an understanding about hygiene routines and go to the toilet to wash hands when they come in from garden and before they have their lunch. Some bring a packed lunch, which is stored in the fridge until lunch time. Older children after school enjoy a cooked meal prepared daily and according to their dietary needs. Meals and snacks are healthy; children eat together and they have helped to grow vegetables in the garden which helps them understand where food comes from. Drinks are freely available and children help themselves to their own mugs when they are thirsty.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

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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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