

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	12/07/2011
Inspector	Susan McCourt
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 2004 and is on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her partner and three children, one of whom is school-age, in a house in Portslade, East Sussex. The whole of the ground floor and an upstairs bedroom are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outside play. Shops, pre-schools, schools and parks are all within walking distance. The family has two pet dogs and some gerbils. The childminder attends the local network childminder groups and meetings. She is registered to care for no more than six children under eight at any one time; of these no more than three may be in the early years age group. She is currently caring for seven children who attend a variety of different sessions. Two children receive funding for early years education.

The childminder is currently studying for a degree in Early Years Studies.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The childminder has exceptional abilities to meet children's needs. Children flourish in her care as she has outstanding skills in enhancing the enjoyment and learning in any situation and children thrive in her care as a result. The childminder has a rigorous approach to all her duties regarding children's well being which occasionally can result in some duplication of records. She continually reflects on her practice and sets herself challenging targets, giving her an excellent capacity for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- refining the recording systems to enable clearer reviews of children's individual progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well safeguarded as the childminder has a very thorough approach to all issues regarding children's safety. All adults in the house are checked and no-one has unsupervised contact with minded children apart from the childminder herself. She has written policies which underpin her robust understanding that the welfare of the child is paramount, and she updates her training in child protection as a matter of course. She is fully aware of the

procedures to follow should she have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child in her care. The childminder has made rigorous risk assessments of her home, and for all activities and outings she undertakes with the children. She maintains all her accident and medication records accurately and with great attention to detail which underpins children's well being.

The childminder has an exceptional commitment to her work and is currently undertaking a degree in early years practice. The needs of the children in her care are the core of her work, and this is so well-embedded that it has become part of the routine. The childminder reflects on her practice using the four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage as a framework, and accurately identifies her strengths as well as where she can enhance her practice. She is able to devise well-targeted plans to meet her high expectations. The childminder shows an exceptionally good commitment to maintaining the continuous improvement of her childcare provision.

The childminder has an excellent range of toys and play equipment which she manages well to ensure that children can sustain and develop their play according to their own interests. These resources include natural and found objects to invite children's curiosity/. The childminder is alongside children as they play and she has exceptional skills in being both an imaginative playmate and a strong teacher, and as such she is an resource to facilitate the children's learning. Children are able to contribute their ideas for activities every day, and parent's views are also highly regarded. The childminder gives feedback about the child's day both in written and verbal formats. She works in partnership with parents to ensure that together they are providing consistent and cohesive care for the children. She works with them closely to ensure any additional needs a child may have are quickly identified and addressed, thereby working to bridge any achievement gaps that may exist.

The childminder has initiated strong working relationships with the local school that children move on to and also works effectively with other agencies such as providing sustained respite care for individual children. The childminder has a robust anti-discriminatory attitude and ensures that children learn about the wider world in authentic and meaningful ways by building on what they know and are interested in, as well as introducing them to new experiences.

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

The childminder has a cosy and welcoming home with a good range of toys and resources which are easily accessible to children. The childminder is very skilled at enabling children to pursue their own interests, and the play materials can be used in numerous imaginative ways. For example, as the children move their jungle animal toys over a picture mat of jungle terrain, the childminder asks them how they will 'cross the river'. The children quickly decide that 'some animals can swim', but others will 'need a bridge', so they find construction bricks to build one. This play is sustained for lengthy periods, and through it the childminder is bringing out all the areas of learning in very simple but highly effective ways. Children have

constant opportunities to solve problems, expand their vocabulary, be creative and negotiate with their friends and really enjoy their play.

The childminder has a strong understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and she bases all her plans on the children's interests and their 'next steps' to ensure that they are full partners in their learning and development. She records her observations of children's achievements and matches them to the Foundation Stage to ensure she is maximising children's progress. Children make significant gains in relation to their capabilities and their starting points. The childminder notes their progress in daily diaries and in learning journey format, which results in her duplicating work, which occasionally has an impact on her ability to monitor her work.

Children are highly engaged in their play, and show fascination and wonder as they explore new materials. Children are excited by what they are learning and are very confident to talk and share their thoughts. Even young children are able to cooperate and negotiate turn-taking in mature and responsible ways. One child makes a rice-shaker with a cup and cling-film and other children quickly find other items to make improvised musical instruments. They all join in, making noises in different ways and clearly have much fun in the spontaneity of the moment. The children have clearly learnt to respect each other's play, and so expect theirs to be respected in turn. Their self esteem is high as a result, and while they are proud of their own achievements, they show pride and delight in their friend's achievements too. This confidence and resilience gives them exceptional skills for both their future learning and their social development.

Children are very well settled and secure in the childminder's care. They show an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they are familiar with the childminder's clear and consistent expectations of behaviour. Even young children safely manage knives when cutting up their fruit and are interested in the different shapes and sizes they can make as they cut. Children make healthy choices about the food they eat and can identify their favourite fruits easily. This is also evident in play, as the children have their dolls make healthy choices about what to have for breakfast. The children have access to water to drink throughout the day. Children have exceptional opportunities to take care of their personal hygiene and are careful to use their own towels and wet-wipes independently. The outdoor space is used well, with a good range of toys and equipment to encourage physical play.

Overall, the children are cared for by a highly skilled and talented childminder who provides them with exceptionally imaginative activities to encourage and support their learning and development.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
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	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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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