

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	17/08/2011
Inspector	Mary van de Peer
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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the childminding

The childminder registered in 2011. He lives with his partner and family in Penenden Heath, Maidstone. The childminder's home is situated in a residential area, close to shops, parks and schools. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding, together with a bedroom upstairs to sleep children. The childminder collects children from the local school and attends several childminding and toddler groups. The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. He may 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 group. The childminder currently has three children in the early years age group on roll and also offers care to older children. The childminder can work with his partner, who is also a registered childminder, and together they may care for a maximum of eight children under eight, of whom no more than six may be in the early years age group.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder is very thorough in the organisation of his childcare service to meet children's individual needs, providing a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all children. The attention given to promoting children's healthy lifestyles is outstanding and the exceptional deployment of resources provides excellent opportunities for children to learn. The childminder engages with parents very well, consistently ensuring children receive continuity of care. Assessment of children's progress is well written and successfully identifies children's next steps and extends their learning potential. However, assessing the right balance between adult-led and child-initiated play is ongoing. The childminder is very positive about his future training and uses reflective evaluation practices effectively to help identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development; therefore he is well placed to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase opportunities for children to follow self-chosen pursuits to enable their developing confidence and emerging independence.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder shows commitment to promoting and safeguarding children's welfare and well-being. He shows a good understanding of the procedures to follow if he has any concerns about children in his care and shares this information with parents. The childminder and his co-childminder organise their provision together to ensure consistency is provided for children and their families. Effective and well recorded risk assessments of the house, garden and outings are regularly carried out, resulting in a secure environment where children can play, learn and enjoy themselves in safety. The children also take part in regular emergency evacuation drills to develop their understanding of personal safety.

All the children benefit from being cared for in a comfortable, child friendly and welcoming environment. The excellent organisation and layout of the play space, including the garden area, means that the comprehensive range of toys and resources can be easily reached by all children. The childminder promotes adult-led activities, so that he can be sure all the learning areas have been covered with all children. However, this can limit the free-play times, where children have opportunities to become more confident and develop their independence while following self-chosen pursuits. There is plenty of space to play and room to sit and relax. All resources and equipment are of good quality and checked regularly for suitability, hygiene and safety.

The childminder ensures he gets to know the children well and recognises each child for their uniqueness, regardless of their background and abilities. He is able to competently describe the individual developmental needs of the children and what activities he can provide to help move them forward.

The childminder has built up a positive working relationship with parents, who receive up-to-date copies of written policies and procedures. The childminder uses a parental contact diary and daily verbal feedback effectively to monitor children's individual care and learning. This efficient two-way communication system provides the childminder with valuable information on the starting points for each child. Routine observations and assessments are supported by photographic evidence. Children's next steps are appropriately identified and used to influence planning.

The childminder shares the children's developmental learning journal with the parents regularly, making visits to their own home to help provide continuity of care and to involve parents in setting future developmental targets for their child. Parents are given regular opportunities to comment on the provision. The childminder is developing procedures to establish two-way partnerships with other professionals involved in the care and learning of the children, should they attend other provisions.

The childminder is very enthusiastic about improving and extending his provision for children and parents. He carefully evaluates his provision and plans effective steps to improve, such as undertaking further training and reviewing how to

improve play opportunities for each child. The childminder actively seeks different ways to ensure children are receiving the best care and education he can offer.

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

Children are happy and settled in the childminder's care. They build close relationships with the childminder, his co-childminder and their peers. Children have easy access to an exciting range of toys and resources which help them make good progress within the early learning goals and develop their future skills. The childminder sets up his home to make it a stimulating and inviting environment where children are building confidence in their choices about what to play with, although adult led activities are a big part of every day planning; for example, early writing sessions and water play.

The childminder has worked hard at developing an effective system to chart children's progress, tracking their progress through regular, daily observations. This information is then used to design activities based on children's interests and abilities, with their next steps noted and used to inform future planning.

Children are well supervised, valued and have a strong sense of belonging in the childminder's care. Examples of their art work are displayed, which helps children feel at home and the childminder talks about their family. The childminder is skilful in supporting children of different ages, through detailed planning and excellent organisation of resources and activities. He ensures activities are meaningful for all children by asking questions and providing resources which are appropriate for their ages. Children learn well through this thoughtful interaction; for example, the childminder knows that one of the children loves cars and trains, so he plans different activities to introduce these into their play, such as train sets, books and water play.

Children are able to play outside every day all year round. The childminder has built a multi-purpose wooden play house in his rear garden. It combines various elements, including a climbing frame and slide, where children of all ages can develop physical skills, such as balancing, as well as learning how to play together and take turns. The childminder is very pro-active in promoting healthy lifestyles for children. He makes sure children can be outdoors for much of the day, so their health and well-being benefits hugely from fresh air, sunlight and exercise. Children are fully supported to learn good personal hygiene routines. For example, even the youngest children understand why they wash their hands before eating meals.

All meals, snacks and drinks are extremely well planned by the childminder and children know how to make healthy choices. The childminder gives high priority to ensuring the food children receive is balanced and contains the correct amount of nutrients they need to grow and develop. Using an extremely informative system to calculate the nutritional and energy value of every meal, the childminder ensures children have the best balanced daily diet he can provide.

The childminder gives appropriate importance to children's learning about how to keep themselves safe, for example, learning how to behave safely when out walking or travelling in the car. The childminder uses effective methods to promote children's good behaviour. Lots of praise and encouragement is given to build confidence and self-esteem. Their language skills are promoted through talking and listening in their play and activities. Children enjoy looking at books and the telling of stories. Overall, children are provided with a wide range of experience which contributes towards 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?	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	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

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	1
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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