

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	20/09/2011
Inspector	Karen Scott
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 was registered in 2003. She lives with her husband, one adult child and one school-age child in the Allington area of Maidstone, close to shops, parks, schools and pre-schools. The whole of the childminder's home is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The family have fish.

The childminder 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 group. She is currently minding four children in this age group, on a part-time basis. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The childminder takes and collects children from local schools and pre-schools on a regular basis. She is a member of an approved childminding network and the childminder works with an assistant.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a good regard for children's well-being and safety and sound procedures help her to safeguard them. However, she has not ensured that parents and carers are fully aware of these. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and develop skills for the future. They enjoy a range of activities but opportunities are missed to further enhance their development. The childminder is keen to update her knowledge in order to provide an evolving service and values the views of others to help her make changes, including developing her evaluation procedures.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- add to the written risk assessments details of places visited
- develop systems for reflecting on practice, identifying strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children
- share with parents and carers the childminder's procedures regarding safeguarding
- develop the use of observations of children to assess their needs, their interests, and their stages of development and use to further plan activities that challenge and aid children's development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children play in a safe and secure environment, as the childminder undertakes risk assessments, understanding that this is an ongoing process. The childminder has sound procedures in place to keep children safe, when on outings, but has not put risk assessments of the places visited, in writing. Children are encouraged to think about their own safety, knowing, for example, that they need to be within eye shot of the childminder at all times. When children are playing on large apparatus, such as a slide, the childminder or her assistant make sure that they stand close by, using toys to demonstrate how to play safely on such equipment. The childminder has a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow should she have any concerns about a child in her care. She also has sound procedures in place if a child should go missing or are not collected, helping to safeguard them. However, these procedures have not been shared with parents and carers so that they are informed too.

Toys and resources are suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children attending, and the childminder has ensured that there are enough to encourage children to play together, if they wish. Resources are easily accessible, allowing children to make choices about what they play with and offer a range of experiences. New toys and resources are purchased to meet children's interests. Children benefit from positive interaction from the childminder and her assistant, who also know when to stand back and let children lead their own play. The childminder has been thinking about her strengths and where she would like to make improvements but this reflection is very much in its infancy. She values the views and opinions of the children, who write about what they enjoy doing with the childminder and welcomes input from parents and carers too. The childminder and her assistant value training and liaise with other childminders, sharing ideas. Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been given some thought. For example, the childminder now ensures that all accidents and medication administered, are recorded following guidance and parents sign each entry, helping to safeguard children. Children receive a range of snacks which the childminder monitors and considers the healthiness of.

The childminder knows children and their families very well, helping her to meet their individual needs. Children share their cultures with the childminder and their peers, bringing items of interest to the setting and the childminder researches the cultures of the children she is caring for, so she is able to embrace and share with everyone. When English is an additional language, the childminder and her assistant try to learn important words and encourage children to share songs in their languages, for example. When children attend other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage the childminder works closely with them in order to meet children's needs and to expand on their learning. For example, the childminder reads children's developmental folders from other settings and fills in forms about the child that she shares with the settings. This promotes children's learning as they work together in the best interest of the child. The childminder shares information verbally with parents and carers and offers contact books

although not all wish to use them. Parents and carers do appreciate the photographs they receive showing their children engaged in a range of activities. Overall parents and carers are very happy with the care that their children receive. They say that the childminder provides a safe and happy family environment, that she is kind and considerate and their children love being with her.

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

Children feel safe and secure with the childminder, turning to her for support and comfort, knowing that they will receive it. They discuss things of importance with her as the childminder listens to what they say, showing interest. Children listen to and follow safety instructions, which are delivered at levels suitable to their ages. For example, after watching a toy go down the slide a child adapts his play on it so that he travels safely too. Children make choices about whether they wish to play in or outdoors as well as regularly visiting local parks and going for walks. They enjoy games of rounders and football, for example, with the childminder and understand the importance of fresh air and regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. They are encouraged to use the bathroom independently and to wash their hands at appropriate times. However, they tend to use hand gel rather than have individual hand towels although when parents request that they use soap this is respected. Children know when they are thirsty, such as after physical play, asking for a drink which they are able to help themselves to whenever they wish. The childminder tends to serve foods that children enjoy rather than always offering a healthy option. However, she introduces new vegetables, for example, and respects children's individual dietary requirements.

Children enjoy being with the childminder and are willing participants in what is available and offered to them. They have formed firm friendships and look forward to seeing each other but also feel able to play alone if they wish, being independent learners. They understand the house rules and are willing tidy-uppers, knowing where everything belongs. Although being cared for in a group, their individual needs are met, helping them to feel secure and happy in their surroundings. Children benefit from sharing in festivals that are relevant to their friends, helping them to understand each other's differences. Younger children learn from the older children, who show them kindness and involve them in what they are doing.

Children participate in a range of activities and play opportunities across the different developmental areas. They make choices about what they play with and benefit from a range of adult and child led activities. The childminder knows the children she is caring for, well. She knows what they enjoy doing, where their strengths are and where they require further support. Overall play is based around what children enjoy doing and although the childminder and parents feel that children make good developmental progress, planning for this is very much improvised and not monitored, to establish the progress children are making. However, when a child is struggling to learn colours, for example, the childminder and her assistant develop a game to play with her, helping her to acquire this

knowledge. Creative play is thoroughly enjoyed by children and is at the heart of what is offered. They are able to help themselves to art and craft resources and particularly enjoy making boxes, for example. Children act out real experiences with small world toys such as trains and a wealth of role play resources. They ask for water to make cups of tea and to clean their home. Children enjoy reading books and they play in an environment that is rich in discussion, helping them to develop their language. Mathematical concepts are learnt through games such as Bingo. There are many opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Cookery and walks in the local area are favourite activities. Children benefit from regular use of a play area opposite the childminder's house where they see squirrels and other wildlife. They enjoy picking produce from the garden, sniffing the tomatoes, for example. The computer is regularly used by children. Overall children are independent learners who are acquiring skills that will help them in the future.

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	3
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	3

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	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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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