

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/12/2011
Inspector	Cilla Mullane.
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 2004. She lives with her husband and three children in Ramsgate, Kent. The whole ground floor of the childminder's house is used childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outside play. The toilet is upstairs.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of four children aged under eight years at any one time, two of whom may be in the early years age group. She is currently caring for three children in this age group. She is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and looks after three in this age range.

The childminder walks to local schools to take and collect children. She attends local carer and toddler groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a loving and stimulating environment, where children very much enjoy their learning and play, and make good progress. Children are well safeguarded, their welfare and safety are a high priority and they learn how to keep themselves safe, but there are fewer activities which promote a healthy lifestyle. Children benefit from a welcoming and stimulating environment, with free access to favourite toys and books, although they are not able to initiate their own creative activities. Partnerships with parents are very strong and supportive, and they very much value the childminder's service and her caring attitude. They do not have regular access to their children's records of progress. The childminder continually improves her practice, developing her good service to children and parents.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the two-way flow of information with parents to involve them in practical ways to support their child's learning and development
- increase the range of resources and activities which help children learn to lead healthy lifestyles
- develop the environment to improve children's ability create, mark-make and design freely.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is well organised. Safe premises, where risks have been assessed and eliminated, means that children are free to play safely. The childminder is very vigilant, allowing toddlers to take small risks as they climb and develop physical skills, but being nearby to ensure they do this safely. Therefore, children become confident in their physical development. She has accurate information to hand to guide her should she have concerns regarding children's well-being.

The childminder is dedicated to providing a good service, and has a positive attitude to self-development, attending training courses to improve her practice. Training topics such as 'boys' development' and 'communication and language' have increased her knowledge and improved outcomes for children.

The childminder treats children as individuals, and works effectively with parents to ensure she can adhere to routines. Training regarding how boys learn has given her an insight into the different learning patterns of girls and boys. She makes good use of the facilities available locally, such as the library and the zoo, and therefore, children see the world around them, and meet a variety of different people.

The childminder has a good awareness of her strengths, including having strong relationships with parents. She continuously thinks critically about her practice, and as a result makes ongoing improvements. For example, she has rearranged the play room to enable children to make more choices and initiate their own play.

Children have a cosy and welcoming dedicated playroom, where they choose their favourite toys, making informed choices from labelled boxes. Although the environment is generally stimulating, and planned creative activities are provided, children do not have free access to pens and pencils, or art materials, limiting their ability to design or mark-make freely.

Very positive comments from parents show that they value the childminder as a warm, caring, friendly and supportive person, who communicates well with them. They show that relationships are very trusting and positive. They are very pleased with their children's progress and the variety of good quality interesting activities, both indoors and out in the community. They are reassured that their children are happy, safe, loved and secure. Parents are welcome to look at their children's records of observations and activity planning, but do not often do so.

Currently no children have input from other professionals, none attend other settings, but the childminder is aware of the need to work in partnership in order to promote consistency and progression.

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

Each child makes good progress in their learning. The childminder uses her detailed knowledge of each child's abilities to plan activities which build on what they already know. She is also quick to respond to their interests, which means that children are motivated and keen to learn. For example, toddlers listen to a musical toy, and jig to the sounds. The childminder promptly provides the box of instruments, and children enjoy experimenting with the different noises.

Young children are settled and secure in the childminder's care, showing they feel safe as they plonk onto her lap for a story, and confidently leaving her side to explore the toys. Older children are encouraged to consider their personal safety. For example, they know that they must stop at the side of the road and look for cars. The childminder keeps a record of practising emergency evacuations of the premises, so she is sure that all children take part and start to understand what action to take in the event of a fire.

Toddlers are enthusiastic about books and reading, which will help them with future learning. They find a favourite book, concentrate well, turn the pages, look at the pictures and point and laugh. They confidently explore their surroundings, repeatedly pushing buttons on musical toys, and pulling the musical instruments out of the box. They show delight, upending a rain-maker and becoming excited, laughing at the noise.

Toddlers persevere at solving problems, working out that they need to push a ball into the top of a giraffe shaped slide, and wait to watch it come out from a tunnel at the bottom. The childminder's enthusiastic praise gives them confidence to try again, and they feel special when they succeed, saying 'Ooooh!' and banging their hands together, beaming with pleasure.

Toddlers are beginning to learn about personal hygiene. They hold their hands out to be wiped. They enjoy mealtimes, feeding themselves competently, and putting their hand into the yogurt pot to get the remains out. Frequent outings enable children to play in the fresh air and develop physical skills such as balance and coordination, for example, at play parks. Some activities, such as growing, preparing and eating vegetables, help children learn about leading healthy lifestyles. However, the amount and variety of such activities is limited.

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	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	3
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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