

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	125713
Inspection date	02/12/2011
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 2000. She lives with her partner, his family, and her two children in Westgate-on-Sea, Kent. There are two dedicated playrooms on the ground floor, which are used for childminding, with an adjoining toilet. There is also another room available for messy play, mealtimes and office work. There is a fully enclosed garden available for outside play.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register. She is registered to care for six children aged under eight years at any one time, three of whom may be in the early years age group. The childminder works with two assistants and when one of them is present they may care for 12 children; of these, six may be in the early years age group and of these, two may be under one year. They are currently looking after eight children in the early years age group on a part-time basis. The childminder is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and is looking after nine children in this age range. The childminder runs and/or attends several local parent and toddler groups. The family has four dogs, guinea-pigs and a snake.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder and her assistants provide a caring atmosphere, where children are looked after in a welcoming environment. The childminder knows the children well, but does not plan fully effectively to ensure maximum progress in all areas of learning. Most documentation is maintained to a satisfactory standard, so the childminder and her assistants work consistently, and parents are informed of the setting's policies and procedures. However, the childminder is in breach of her conditions of registration. Children are generally settled and confident in the childminder's care, but they are not consistently encouraged to think about their personal safety. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive, but they are not encouraged to be included in their children's learning and development. The childminder has a suitable capacity to maintain continuous improvement and evaluates her practice satisfactorily in order to identify some areas for development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further systems to monitor children's individual progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning

- practice the emergency evacuation regularly so that all children know how to protect themselves in an emergency
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents to promote a shared understanding of children's individual needs and involve parents in practical ways to support their child's learning and development
- develop the use of reflective practice and self-evaluation to identify strengths and priorities for development that will continuously improve the quality of the provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is promoted to a satisfactory extent. The premises are safe, and the childminder and her assistants are very vigilant about children's safety. The childminder is in breach of her conditions of registration as she sometimes works with another childminder. She has not informed Ofsted of the change of childminder with whom she occasionally works. It is a requirement to do so. On this occasion, Ofsted does not intend to take further action.

The dogs share the garden (which is astro-turfed) with the children, and the childminder checks the area carefully before the children go outside. The environment is welcoming, and children have access to a designated play area with a range of good quality toys low down so that they can self select. Babies and toddlers confidently access programmable toys and enjoy the sounds when they press buttons. The outdoor area is well equipped with good quality and challenging apparatus, such as slides.

Children gain a balanced view of diversity in society through plentiful and interesting outings, so they are familiar with their local environment, and meet lots of different people. The childminder works with two assistants, and so children benefit from their different strengths. One of the childminding assistants is male, and he sometimes works with the children in the early years age range. He is a good role model, as he is easy going and fun, and good at helping children to enjoy activities. Therefore, children benefit from seeing a man in a caring role.

Self-evaluation is used to a satisfactory extent to identify weaknesses and make improvements to the setting. For example, the playroom used by the younger children has been improved to better meet their needs when school aged children are present. Toys and equipment are frequently updated. The childminder has some plans for the future that are targeted appropriately to improve outcomes for children.

Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive. The childminder acts according to their wishes, for example, she contacts them when their children appear unwell to ask for their agreement to give medicine. She ensures that she complies with parents' wishes regarding the time children spend playing computer games. The childminder chats to parents daily, keeping them adequately informed about their children's activities and well-being. She acts on any suggestions they make to meet their children's needs. However, they are not encouraged to further

support their child's learning and development at home. Thank you letters indicate their satisfaction with the service provided. They appreciate her professional and flexible attitude, the good quality regular outings, the homely environment and they trust her to discuss any concerns regarding their children. Currently, none of the children attend other settings, such as nurseries, but the childminder is aware of the importance of liaising with them to promote continuity and progression.

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

The childminder observes the children and knows them well. She therefore has sufficient knowledge to provide activities to challenge them adequately and to inform parents in general terms about their development. However, this system does not enable her to give parents detailed information about their child's progress across all areas of learning. Children are grouped according to age for some activities, so they take part in generally age appropriate activities, but the lack of planning for each individual child often results in children being treated the same, rather than as individuals.

Children generally enjoy their time with the childminder, as they are able to choose from appropriate resources and initiate their own play. There is a suitable balance between child initiated and adult led activities, but sometimes the latter are over directed, limiting children's ability to design and create freely. Children go out with the childminder frequently. They recall with pleasure a recent trip on a train to London, chatting enthusiastically and giving names to the trains.

Children feel safe with the childminder and her assistants. Babies who are feeling unwell are instantly comforted when picked up, and join in vocalising with the childminder, smiling and making eye contact. A sense of belonging is encouraged, as children have their own named pegs, often decorated with children's own work. The childminder has not practised fire evacuation of the premises with children for a couple of years. Therefore, children do not know what action to take in the event of an emergency.

Children generally behave well. Some cooperate with tidying up, saying 'I'll help you'. They respond to praise, which increases self esteem and encourages them to take part and persevere. They display good manners, as adults say 'you're welcome' when children say 'thank you'. Children are kind to one another, helping to find a teddy to comfort a child going down for a nap. They are proud of their achievements, saying 'I'm doing great!' as they succeed during a sticking activity. These are all suitable skills which will help with future attitudes to learning.

A healthy lifestyle is encouraged. Children have lots of opportunities to play in the fresh air. Resources and games are available which encourage children to talk about healthy and unhealthy food. Children enjoy a variety of snacks, most of which are healthy, such as fruit, vegetables and cheese.

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	3
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	3
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:

Not Met (with actions)

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- inform Ofsted of the name, date of birth, address and telephone number of any person aged 16 or over working or living on the premises (Changes to people) (also applies to the voluntary part of the Childcare Register) 27/12/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the compulsory part of the Childcare Register (Changes to people) 27/12/2011