

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	23/01/2012
Inspector	Jane Wakelen
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 registered in 2004. She lives with her husband and two children aged 13 and nine years in Herne Bay, Kent. The house is situated within walking distance of schools, parks, shops and the beach. The whole of the ground floor is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The family has a dog and two cats as pets. The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children under eight years at any one time; of these, no more than three may be in the early years age range. The childminder is currently minding two children in this age group. She also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered on the Early Year Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder walks to the primary school to take and collect children and attends a couple of local toddler and childminding groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The childminder has a satisfactory understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to suitably meet children's needs. She has started a process for observations and assessment, although this is not yet robust to ensure children make progress in all areas of learning. Resources are adequate to support children's learning and development but the range is not wide. Children are soundly supported in the settling-in process and learn to feel safe and secure. The childminder works in partnership with parents to provide continuity of care, although systems are still being established. The childminder has started to self-evaluate her provision and is aware of her strengths and areas to maintain continuous improvement satisfactorily.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- observe, analyse, and use what is found out about the children to plan for their next steps in their learning
- provide a rich and varied environment to support children's learning and development, using a range of natural materials and different resources to enable children to explore and learn in safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces
- extend reflective practice and self-evaluation to further identify strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a sound understanding about safeguarding children and implements a written policy and procedure to share with parents. She understands the process to follow should she have any concerns about children in her care and has the government booklet, 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. Relevant phone numbers and contact details for outside agencies are available to further promote children's well-being. The childminder uses a system of 'passwords' to ensure each child is collected by a responsible person. She checks that children are within her sight at all times and does not leave children on their own with individuals who are not vetted. Basic risk assessments are used to identify hazards within her home and measures are put in place to rectify these, thus promoting children's safety.

Children have opportunities to meet different people through school runs and attendance at local childminding and toddler groups. The childminder adequately promotes equality and diversity, ensuring all children feel welcome in her home. She has suitable information about children's backgrounds and needs. This enables her to meet children's individual requirements and promotes a sense of security for them. Resources are kept in low storage that is easily accessible for children. However, the boxes are not labelled to enable children to see at a glance what toys are available. The toys and resources are sufficient and appropriate for the ages of children attending, although the range is limited. This results in children having limited opportunities to use natural materials or a range of different media to explore and experiment.

Parents feel confident with the care the childminder offers and are kept informed on a daily basis through verbal communication and contact books. They give written consent for aspects of care, such as routine outings, travelling in a car and emergency medical treatment, supporting children's welfare and safety. The childminder works in suitable partnership with the parents to provide continuity of care and meet their expectations. Children are involved in making some decisions, although opportunities to actively gain their views and suggestions have not been fully explored. There are currently no children on roll who attend other settings or need support from other agencies. However, the childminder is aware of the need to work in partnership with any other settings if the need arises.

The childminder has only recently started minding children in the early years age range so many processes are still in their infancy. This results in systems not yet being fully established to provide robust procedures or fully effective opportunities for children. The childminder has started to self-evaluate her provision to be aware of many areas to further develop and of several areas that are her strengths. However, this is not fully effective in identifying opportunities for children to explore with a range of different resources. The childminder has recently completed her first aid course and hopes to attend additional training courses to further extend her knowledge and skills.

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

Children are generally happy and settled. The childminder provides a reasonable range of teaching methods and adequate resources to meet children's individual needs. Levels of challenge are sufficient to engage children's attention, although not always addressing their interests. The childminder is developing her knowledge of each child, together with their likes and dislikes to inform her planning. She works with parents to keep them informed and obtains information to identify children's stage of development. She has started to observe children and to record these observations. However, she has not yet implemented a robust system to regularly analyse these to identify children's next steps to inform planning. This results in activities not always challenging or extending children's learning in all areas.

Children talk about what they are doing and the childminder uses this communication to promote their language and understanding. They choose puzzles and show pride when they complete them. They ask to draw, choosing colours at random and making marks on paper while exploring the media. Children ask to dress up from the limited costumes available, eagerly wanting to join the 'fire brigade'. The childminder supports this choice, enabling children to make a play fire engine, steering wheel and hat. Children identify colours in their play and count during routines or when playing, for example, building brick towers. They use the rocket shape-sorter, looking at different shapes and then counting from five to one for 'blast off' and smile with pleasure. They sometimes use toys to learn about cause and effect, expanding their knowledge of communication technology. The childminder provides an adequate range of books and extends children's learning through using the library. Therefore, children are beginning to develop their skills for the future.

Children begin to understand the importance of healthy lifestyles. They are reminded about washing after using the potty and before eating. They show satisfaction as they sit at the table and announce 'my hands are all clean now'. The childminder talks to children about healthy eating and encourages them to have fruit for their snacks, instead of biscuits. She is aware of their dietary needs and is working with parents to provide a balanced diet. Daily opportunities to benefit from fresh air and exercise further support a healthy lifestyle.

Children suitably learn how to keep themselves safe. The childminder gently reminds them about being careful of a brick wall and not to stand on the bench, in case they fall. Children behave appropriately and are beginning to learn the displayed house rules. Younger children are supported in their care routines, such as sleep times, to meet their needs. Children begin to show they feel secure, asking to be picked up when upset and receiving comfort and reassurance. They form positive relationships and develop skills to work independently and alongside their peers. They begin to learn about diversity, when meeting others in their local community. All children are valued as individuals and the childminder works hard to ensure they are settled, comfortable and gain a sense of belonging.

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:	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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