

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	05/07/2012
Inspector	Mary Vandepeer
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 2012. She lives with her partner and two young children in Loose, in Maidstone, Kent. The whole of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. There are a variety of steps internally throughout the building. The family has a pet rabbit and two cats.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of five children, aged under eight years, at any one time; of these, two may be in the early years age range. The childminder is registered to provide overnight care for up to three children. She currently has two children in the early years age group on roll. The childminder also provides relief childminding for other childminders. She drives to local schools to take and collect children and attends local parent/toddler and childminding groups.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The childminder provides a welcoming, homely and stimulating environment for children. Effective processes help ensure good consideration is given to the safeguarding and welfare of children. The childminder demonstrates a secure knowledge of each child. This allows her to meet children's individual learning and development needs well, especially in language and communication skills. The childminder makes sure she meets children's unique care needs by engaging very well with parents. She is also developing her links with other practitioners to help further support children's learning. The positive use of self-evaluation and reflective practice enables the childminder to successfully continue her professional development and to effectively maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- strengthen the arrangements for sharing relevant information with practitioners in other early years settings children attend in order to ensure effective continuity and progression

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder is professional and organised in her approach to her childcare service. She shows dedication to her role and responsibilities. She is planning to complete an online course to keep her sound safeguarding procedures up-to-date. The childminder has clear and suitable processes to follow, should there be any concern about a child. She shares this information with parents through her written policies, procedures and other supporting documents. All required records and documentation are in place. Regular risk assessments are carried out in the house, garden and for trips and outings undertaken, to help keep children safe and protect them from injury. These are clearly recorded and updated. The childminder makes sure she supervises children appropriately, including during play in the garden, to help keep them safe at all times. Children also take part in regular evacuation drills that are noted, along with any comments to help improve the next practice.

Children benefit from being cared for in a comfortable, child friendly and welcoming environment. Many resources are freely accessible and children of all ages can choose what they would like to play with. There is good space for children to play in, as well as room for quieter times. The age-appropriate and challenging toys and activities are of good quality and are checked regularly for suitability. Providing positive images for children, by way of resources and different experiences, is being given appropriate attention by the childminder. Effective use of the garden and the countryside location of the childminder's home helps her to provide exciting and stimulating outdoor experiences for every child.

The childminder has developed a positive, working relationship with parents. She gives daily verbal feedback to them. This is supported by the use of contact books. Parents inform the childminder of their child's starting points. The childminder records observations and assessments of each child in a personal profile that is shared with their parents at regular intervals. This helps promote a shared understanding of children's individual needs and involve parents in practical ways to support their child's learning and development. The childminder identifies children's next steps and uses these effectively to influence her flexible planning. She is clearly very knowledgeable about the individual developmental needs of children, and which activities she provides to help move them forward. The childminder is beginning to establish lines of communication with other professionals involved in the care of children.

The childminder shows a good level of commitment in promoting children's welfare and learning. She aims to improve and extend her provision for parents and children. The childminder effectively reflects on what she is providing and evaluates this to decide on positive steps to improve her service. For example, attending further training and improving the quality of her observations and assessments on each child. The childminder actively seeks new ways to improve the care and education that she offers to children.

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

The childminder works well with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, using it to provide children with opportunities to progress in their learning and development. She moves children forward by identifying their strengths and learning priorities. Children enjoy a range of age-appropriate activities and the childminder is skilled at extending their play. She asks open questions and enables even the youngest children to think for themselves. Children are able to make choices and decisions about what they want to play with, which encourages independence. Early communication, using signing and early stages of vocabulary, is developing well. The childminder states that she encourages children to listen and speak, getting them to describe what they are doing.

The childminder's positive reinforcement of their achievements through praise and encouragement helps children to feel good about themselves. For example, when younger children attempt to take a few steps, the childminder gives them appropriate attention and they show pleasure in what they have done. Children's behaviour is good, and they respond well to the expectations of the childminder. They learn how to respect others and good manners are insisted upon, such as excuse me, please and thank you. The childminder is a good role model and leads by example. The relationship between children and the childminder is close, safe and comfortable. Children clearly enjoy their time and experience with her and this is reflected in the ways they respond to her.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment that is child orientated. Toys and resources are easily available for children to choose what to play with. The childminder lives in a small village, a small stream surrounds her house and there are fields and country walks which mean all children benefit from the fresh air, exercise and discovering nature. Photographs support the observations the childminder has made of the children enjoying picnics, eating food some of them have helped to prepare. Parks are visited, where they play together and develop skills, such as balancing and learning how to swing themselves. Local toddler groups and activities are popular with the older children but the younger ones enjoy exploring the new environment and take part in making music. The childminder is able to read a story to the children and hold their interest, as she changes the tone of her voice to match the characters in the book. Children learn to listen and concentrate as well as enjoying the pleasure of books and stories. Children are effectively learning about the importance of good personal hygiene routines and healthy lifestyles. Meals, snacks and drinks are well planned, balanced and nutritious.

An emergency evacuation drill is practised and road safety is discussed with the children, helping them to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe. Children's physical development and interest in the local environment and the world around them are effectively promoted. The childminder provides a fun, stimulating learning environment for all children. As a result, children are achieving well and are developing good skills for 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?	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	2
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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