

Inspection date	25/04/2013
Previous inspection date	29/09/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The childminder understands how children learn. She supports all children to make good progress through child-initiated and structured activities. The accessible resources are developed to meet individual children's interests and keep them motivated.
- The childminder places a high priority on helping children to acquire communication, language and literacy skills. She helps children to develop an interest and appreciation of books and make good progress in their learning.
- The childminder promotes children's self-esteem and confidence through her consistent use of praise and encouragement.
- Children build secure attachments with the childminder. This ensures that they are settled and happy in the provision.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There are few opportunities for children to investigate the natural world, with particular regard to observing and handling natural objects.
- The childminder is not formally seeking parents' views on the quality of provision; these views would enhance the self-evaluation process.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the living room.
- The inspector talked with the childminder.
- The inspector looked at professional development records, a range of policies and other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents from information provided by the childminder.

Inspector

Linda Bird

Full Report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1998 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and four children in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor of the property is used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is able to take and collect children from local schools and pre-schools. She takes children to the local parks and a farm.

There are currently six children on roll; of whom three children are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder is able to provide care on weekdays during term time and during the school holidays.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- provide further opportunities for children to investigate the natural world through the use of a wider range of natural resources
- build on self-evaluation by developing the way that the views of parents are incorporated to assist in identifying areas for improvement.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop. She is skilled at promoting children's learning through interesting activities that engage children. Children's independence is successfully promoted as they are able to make choices about what they play with. She is careful to achieve an appropriate balance between activities that she initiates and those chosen by the children.

The children have developed a keen interest in playing with puzzles. They work independently, carefully fitting the pieces together and persevere when faced with a problem. The childminder intervenes appropriately and does so when the children are unable to find the piece of puzzle that they need. The children concentrate for extended periods of time and get great satisfaction from the completion of the puzzle. The

childminder offers praise and encouragement. This supports the development of self-confidence and encourages them to persevere when faced with a challenge.

The childminder ensures that the children have plenty of opportunities for developing an interest in, and love of, books. The children choose the books for the childminder to read and sit closely with her on the sofa. They are attentive and enjoy being read to. The childminder encourages the children to engage with the story by talking about the pictures. The children handle books and printed material with interest and have some favourite books and are making good progress in relation to age-related expectations. The childminder ensures that the children are helped to develop early reading skills; consequently they are being helped to acquire the necessary skills and a positive disposition towards learning. The childminder is committed to ensuring that children are ready to benefit when starting school.

The childminder plays and talks with the children. She engages their interest in counting and encourages them to count lots of different objects. The children count objects on a page by touching each item. They count accurately up to ten and show an interest in numbers in the environment. The childminder is effectively supporting the children's understanding of numeracy; consequently children are making good progress in mathematics.

The childminder makes regular observations and assessments of the children's progress. This information is used to plan next steps and therefore to meet children's learning and development needs. Each child has a 'Learning Journey' which contains observations, photographs and samples of work. The childminder ensures that this information is easily accessible to parents. She discusses each individual child's learning and development with the parents; in this way they are kept informed about their child's progress. The areas of learning are well-planned for, but the childminder provides fewer opportunities for children to investigate the natural world with particular regard to observing and handling natural objects.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The childminder knows each child very well. She exchanges relevant information with parents and so has a good understanding of each child's needs, interests and abilities. The childminder praises and encourages the children, in this way she is helping to develop their self-esteem and confidence. She is sensitive to their emotional needs and supports the children to develop secure attachments to her. The children feel safe in her care.

Children are encouraged to be independent, they can choose what they want to do and toys and resources are easily accessible to them. They have the opportunity to mix and play with other children of different ages and interests. The children are learning to share, to take turns and to play happily together. These experiences ensure that the children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning and for transition to school.

The childminder is careful to ensure that children are supported to lead a healthy life style.

She frequently takes the children for walks and to the local parks. This ensures that they get plenty of fresh air and exercise to promote their health and well-being. The indoor environment is spacious and children move around freely and independently. The youngest children use the furniture to help them stand and move around. They enjoy having the freedom to explore their environment. The childminder provides healthy snacks of fresh fruit. The children learn to sit at the table and to use utensils correctly. Water is accessible to the children throughout the day so that they do not get thirsty.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn. She has the experience and skills to effectively meet the needs of young children. She provides a stimulating and enjoyable range of activities for the children in her care. The children are encouraged to make choices and to be independent learners.

There are well-developed partnerships with parents and the childminder enjoys the confidence of parents. Parents are able to share information about their children with the childminder. This close link makes an effective contribution to ensuring children's needs are met. The childminder has a clear understanding of her responsibility to work in partnership with other childcare providers and professionals to enhance learning opportunities. She liaises closely with the staff at the local nursery that is attended by one of the children. She is able therefore to provide continuity of provision for the children between the settings. The childminder has received advice from the local authority early years development officer. This link benefits children's care and learning by providing a source of professional advice for the childminder.

The childminder has a good understanding of how to protect children in her care and is vigilant about their supervision. A daily risk assessment is carried out of the areas where the children play. Due to building work, a decision has been taken on safety grounds not to use the garden until the work is completed. A stair gate is fitted on the stairs to keep the children safe. A policy for fire evacuation is in place and regular fire drills are carried out. In the event of a child protection issue the childminder has the necessary information and telephone numbers to contact appropriate services. She has a first aid qualification and she and other adults living in the house have been suitably vetted to work with young children.

The childminder is committed to offering the best possible provision for the children and looks to ensure that the children learn and develop to their full potential. She has completed a self-evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of her setting and has identified improvements that she plans to make in the future, but has not obtained written feedback on the quality of her provision from parents as part of the self-evaluation process.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	149347
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	876196
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	3
Number of children on roll	6
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	29/09/2009
Telephone number	

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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