

Inspection date	29/10/2014
Previous inspection date	16/03/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Teaching is exceptionally good because the childminder fully understands how young children learn and expertly builds on their enthusiasm for learning. She accurately assesses their development and provides a rich range of interesting experiences that meet children's individual learning needs. Consequently, children make the best possible progress.
- Children develop very caring relationships with the childminder and other children. Their individual care and learning needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met in this nurturing, child-centred environment, which means that they thrive.
- Children's safety and safeguarding are central to the childminder's practice. This means children's protection is assured both within the home and while on outings.
- Leadership is strong and the pursuit of excellence is demonstrated by the childminder's commitment to her own development, and her continuous review of high-quality systems to evaluate her practice. She implements robust monitoring of her assistant's work. These measures ensure that children continue to benefit from high-quality care within this setting.
- The childminder develops exceptionally strong partnerships with parents. She implements a wealth of ideas to fully involve them and promote a shared approach towards children's care and learning. As a result, children excel in all areas of learning and development when with the childminder and at home.

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 home and talked with the childminder.
- The inspector viewed the areas of the premises and garden used for childminding.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of suitability of household members, and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's online self-evaluation form as well as other evaluation documents.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's website.

Inspector

Lynne Talbot

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2001 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her partner, one adult child and one child aged 14 years in Stevenage. The childminder employs an assistant who works alongside her when necessary. The whole of the house is used for childminding and there is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The childminder attends appropriate social groups and activities each week. She also regularly visits community facilities, such as farms and activity centres. There are currently six children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder operates all year round from 7.15am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays and family holidays.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider building further on the already excellent understanding of care practices for children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities for future care placements.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are continually supported in making the best possible progress in their learning and development. The childminder has an expert knowledge of the seven areas of learning, which is underpinned by an excellent understanding of how children learn. As a result, she provides a wealth of developmentally appropriate activities that capture children's interests and ignite their enthusiasm for learning. Consequently, children are highly motivated and inquisitive learners who are rapidly acquiring the skills and attitudes they need to be ready for school. For example, children avidly investigate scented malleable dough with which the childminder provides a wealth of materials that stimulate their senses and encourage them to explore. They describe the 'spicy smell' of cinnamon, curry and paprika as they mould the dough and compare the smell and texture of different herbs that the childminder provides. Children recall recent activities they have undertaken to investigate Diwali, such as the food tasting and art and craft work. They manipulate the many materials, including natural pebbles and bark, extending their excellent vocabulary as they describe their textures and weights to the childminder. The childminder offers a running commentary about what children are doing and asks simple questions that promote them to think about what they are seeing. She uses language that promotes mathematical understanding, talking about big and small objects, and counts items with the children. All children receive uninterrupted time to listen, talk and practise their emergent skills. For example, they use wooden circular logs to thread and develop long

sections. The childminder supports all children and helps them consider what they have done. Children skilfully count to nine without help, and predict that another one would make 10. The childminder gently encourages them to explore mathematical language and they confidently compare lengths of their 'strings of logs'.

Children's communication and language skills are given a very high priority. The childminder models all forms of communication, which provides children of all ages with many opportunities to communicate. For example, the childminder uses sign language and emphasises body language and facial expressions, as well as a picture exchange system, for communication. Opportunities for one-to-one support are given high priority by the childminder and are woven into the daily practice. For example, she develops many home-made games, focusing on, for example, colour or number sets, that children select to share with her or to take home. Children delight in choosing activities to complete together. For instance, they are extremely animated when engaged in reviewing the 'diary' and suitcase of the travelling teddy who visits their homes and goes on holiday with them. Children ask meaningful questions about what they see and feel, for example, when feeling the sheep's wool and snake skin in the teddy bear suitcase. This further enhances their vocabulary as well as fostering their curiosity for new knowledge. The childminder embraces all opportunities to extend children's learning and enthusiasm for discovery during such activities. For example, when children spot a national flag that they, and the childminder, do not recognise, she helps them to consider how they might identify it. This results in the use of an atlas and the internet for research. This maximises their understanding that books and writing hold meaning and enhances their understanding of the use of technology. Within such simple activities, the childminder optimises children's interest in the world around them and they engage in extensive discussions about different countries, as well as places they have visited in England. Children show excellent critical thinking when they link a trip to London and Buckingham Palace with a project they enjoyed writing and sending letters; they tell the childminder that the Queen is on the stamps they used. The childminder embraces children's ideas and interests and successfully tailors activities to meet children's individual learning needs. For example, during the same activity, younger children's interest in aeroplanes is acknowledged and they are provided with time to point to and describe the different aeroplanes, naming the colours and spotting the different models.

The high quality of teaching, individually tailored activities and an exceptional educational programme help children of all ages and abilities make rapid progress in their learning, given their starting points. The childminder continually observes and monitors what children can do to maximise learning and development. She uses her expert knowledge to ensure that individual priorities for children's learning are unique. For example, the childminder completes an assessment for planning for each child and provides parents with a plan for the month, to which they are invited to contribute ideas. Such strong practice supports children in making the best possible progress. Partnerships with parents are excellent and the childminder works extremely hard to ensure that a shared approach to children's learning is achieved. Children's progress is fully reviewed with parents, through informal and formal review meetings. The childminder provides them with comprehensive summary progress checks for children between the ages of two and three years, as well as in preparation for a move to another setting. She also completes a developmental summary every three months. Parents routinely complete a 'something to

share' form to enhance shared achievements to further inform personalised planning for children. Such comprehensive methods ensure that parents are fully informed of their child's progress, how they spend their time and the priorities for future learning. The childminder provides a dedicated teaching environment within which children have superb opportunities to explore and learn actively. This lays excellent foundations for children's future move to school.

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

Children's well-being is central to all aspects of the childminder's practice. She takes account of each child's individual needs to provide personalised settling-in procedures and works extremely closely with parents to establish a positive relationship and foundation for learning. For example, she visits children at home to help establish a strong relationship and to help her to build a detailed picture of children as individuals. Detailed care plans are provided by parents when children first begin attending to help the childminder to establish daily care which reflects children's routines at home. This helps her to work closely in support of children's well-being. Children demonstrate very secure attachments with the childminder. The caring, supportive and nurturing environment ensures that all children feel valued, safe and secure. The childminder is extremely attentive and offers children appropriate support and independence. Children move purposefully within her stimulating home and make informed choices about how and where they spend their time. For example, children select their play from labelled boxes, cloth bags with themed resources, and, spontaneously, return resources to where they belong. As a result of these steps, children are emotionally prepared for school or a move to another setting from an early age.

All children receive consistent and positive behaviour management that helps them to develop confidence. Frequent praise shows children that they are valued and fosters excellent self-esteem. The childminder consistently demonstrates to children that they are valued and that their views are respected. For example, children choose their snack from a selection shown in the 'snack pack bag', they decide which new resources to purchase, plan trips to undertake, and contribute towards their own learning files. Children also make 'Christmas boxes' to donate to those less fortunate than themselves at Christmas. Consequently, children develop highly attuned awareness of their own value and develop a clear appreciation for the needs of others.

Children's health and physical needs are fully met. Their physical development is significantly enhanced because of the consideration that the childminder gives to providing challenging resources in the environment. For example, in the garden all children, including the youngest babies, manipulate jugs, funnels and tubing with water, and they investigate natural materials including logs and pebbles. The childminder provides inventive practical materials that enable children to develop an early grip for writing skills. For example, she makes pots of coloured matchsticks to post into clear containers; younger children enjoy the physical action while older children begin to sort by 'sets' and calculate as they play. These activities enhance both their physical dexterity and invite discovery of the natural world and mathematics. Children are gently introduced to self-care and, from an early age, take full responsibility for washing and drying their hands,

demonstrating that they understand when they need to do so. They comprehensively explain that they need to wash germs off of their hands because germs may make them poorly. The childminder emphasises good eating habits to support health and uses a six-week menu plan, using fresh, top quality, seasonal ingredients. She continuously provides age-appropriate explanations to raise children's awareness of potential hazards. For example, children chop their own fruit with safety knives and are helped to consider the way to use them in order to be safe. Consequently, children become increasingly aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

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

The childminder has highly effective systems which are well embedded and continuously monitored to ensure that she meets both the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements. Children's safety and safeguarding are central to all aspects of the childminder's practice. The childminder demonstrates a robust understanding of child protection issues and implements appropriate procedures to protect children from possible harm. She maintains a highly effective internet security system, frequently attends training to update her knowledge, and shares all procedures and information with parents regarding published safeguarding procedures. The childminder has rigorous vetting and recruitment systems to ensure that her assistant is suitable to work with young children. She ensures that her assistant attends numerous, focused training courses, to enhance their knowledge of how to support children, and she thoroughly monitors their practice, including appraisals, to ensure that it meets her exacting standards. The childminder completes comprehensive risk assessments which ensure that children can move and play freely within her home, with minimum risk from harm. She takes thorough steps to ensure that children are protected when in the community or on outings further afield. For example, children wear fluorescent vests and a badge or wrist strap with the childminder's telephone number on it should they become detached from the childminder. Furthermore, children practise a 'whistle' system, which means if they hear it, they stop what they are doing and immediately return to the childminder. All these steps mean that children are fully protected and kept safe.

The childminder is a very experienced early years practitioner who is fully committed to her continued professional development. Since her last inspection she has completed a wealth of relevant training courses which include a foundation degree and a degree in early years. She has also been assessed for, and achieved, Early Years Teacher Status. Consequently, the childminder is able to continually develop and extend her already excellent practice which strengthens all areas of care, learning and development for children in her care. The childminder's drive for improvement is underpinned by her exemplary reflective practice. She methodically completes evaluative reviews of all activities and aspects of her service, and maintains comprehensive action plans for further improvement. For example, the childminder has identified the further extension of her knowledge about children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities for future care placements, as an area to develop. The childminder includes the views of parents, children and other professionals to assist her in her self-evaluation. For example, she invites comment through detailed, topic-specific questionnaires, as well as using

several methods to closely map children's interests and activities, which are successful. These methods assist the childminder in accurately monitoring children's records of learning and development to reflect children's capabilities, inform future plans and precisely track each child's progress over a period of time.

Highly successful partnerships with parents and other providers are well established. This ensures a shared approach to children's learning and contributes significantly to the rapid progress children make. Parents report that they value the quarterly development records and the ideas that they receive to help them extend learning at home. The childminder makes sure that she takes every possible step to maintain a consultative relationship with other settings that children attend, including those with whom she has no face-to-face contact. For example, she provides extensive information to them by sharing her files, and she seeks and uses information provided by parents within her planning, and initiates email contact. As a result, consistency in learning for children is achieved. The childminder uses a wide range of policies and procedures that are unique to her provision. She provides parents with a range of extremely informative material, such as her secure website and monthly newsletter. Parents report that they value these highly because they enable them to be a part of the whole care process. The childminder works confidently with other agencies when required to ensure that children get the support they need, to help them make the best progress possible. Children in this setting have an extremely positive experience that forms a superb base for their continued well-being, and outstanding learning and development.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	149348
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	854242
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	6
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	16/03/2009
Telephone number	

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

