

Inspection date	15/01/2015
Previous inspection date	09/11/2009

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

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Children are effectively protected from harm because the childminder is knowledgeable about her responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children.
- Children are settled and secure in the childminder's care because she is warm and caring towards them and works in partnership with parents. This helps to promote children's well-being and self-esteem.
- The childminder understands the importance of gathering useful information from parents when their children start and maintaining communication to ensure children's care and welfare needs are met.

It is not yet good because

- The childminder does not always use observations and assessments effectively, in order to identify precise next steps in children's learning and to track their progress. Consequently, children's ongoing good development is not always assured.
- Self-evaluation is weak. Therefore, the childminder is unable to identify her strengths and address her weaknesses effectively to improve her practice further.
- The way in which some of the resources are presented does not maximise children's learning through play, as they are unable to find the toys they want.

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 the childminder engaging in activities with the children and discussed the learning that was taking place.
- 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 documents, including the safeguarding policy.
- The inspector took account of the information shared with parents, as recorded in written documents.

Inspector

Jill Hardaker

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Stevenage. The whole of the ground floor and the rear garden are used for childminding. The family has a dog and a guinea pig as pets. The childminder attends local childminder toddler groups and visits the shops and local parks on a regular basis. She takes children to, and collects them from, the local school. There are currently nine children on roll, three of whom are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder operates from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays and family holidays.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- make better use of the observations and assessments of children's learning, in order to identify children's precise next steps and effectively track their progress, to ensure children's good development.

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

- strengthen self-evaluation by developing ways to monitor and evaluate practice, in order to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses to further improve the provision
- review the way resources are organised to enhance children's exploration through free play.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder supports children's learning and development adequately, through play-based learning opportunities. She talks to parents to help her establish children's general starting points. The childminder notices what children do as she observes them in their play. This helps her make some routine assessments based on her own knowledge of how children develop. However, these assessments of children's learning do not consistently identify precise next steps in their learning. Therefore, the childminder is unable to demonstrate how she ensures children make good progress in their learning, in readiness for school. The childminder shares information with parents through discussion and daily diaries, so that they are aware of children's activities and receive general information

about their progress. This includes the mandatory progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. This gives parents the opportunity to share their children's achievements at home and demonstrates a consistent approach to children's learning and development.

The childminder's quality of teaching generally supports children's play, as she gets down to their level and offers care and attention to enhance their learning experiences. She has a sound knowledge of how children learn through child-based activities and follows their interests to create spontaneous learning opportunities. For example, as children play imaginatively, she joins in the play and suggests what children might need to put in their bags to go shopping. However, at times both, the childminder and the children find it difficult to find the resources they want. This is because not all the resources are organised well and easily accessible to the children.

The childminder demonstrates that she provides some support for children's early mathematical and literacy skills through activities, such as sharing books. As the children point to the pictures she tells them the names of objects and she encourages the children to find their favourite books. She helps them begin to learn about numbers through counting how many blocks they build in a tower, using stacking cups and modelling positional language as children play. She uses suitable opportunities to broaden children's understanding of the world. For example, they explore their local community as they go for walks, and the childminder helps them investigate the natural world as they play in the park.

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

Children are generally happy and settled with the childminder. She helps children to interact positively and to learn about appropriate behaviour. For example, she explains to children why they should not take toys from other children and praises them for sharing. The childminder encourages children during their play, which provides some support for children to develop positive self-esteem. For example, when children complete tasks they share 'high fives' with the childminder. This helps children to become confident and to have a positive approach to learning.

The childminder's promotes children's safety in the garden, for example, by ensuring gates are secure. A suitable range of resources help to promote their all-round physical development, such as a slide, balls and bicycles. Regular visits to the local park enable children to use larger equipment and to begin to take risks in a safe environment. However, her support for children's physical development is not clearly focused on their precise next steps in learning. This regular exercise helps children develop a positive approach to adopting active, healthy lifestyles. Furthermore, the childminder makes up games with the children as they walk to and from school. These are effective ways to ensure children learn about road safety in a fun way.

The childminder promotes healthy eating by encouraging parents to provide healthy meals and snacks for their children. They have access to drinking water throughout the day and this makes sure they are never thirsty. The childminder uses daily conversations and

diaries to share information with parents. This aids her in understanding each child's individual care needs. The childminder helps children develop good social skills as they attend childminder toddler groups and go out for meals. Regular visits to the local shops and post office enable the children to benefit from real-life experiences. Consequently, children are developing some skills that will benefit them in later life, such as at school.

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. She is confident and knowledgeable about what to do should she have any concerns regarding a child in her care. A clearly written policy and procedures to ensure all children are protected are adhered to and also shared with parents. This helps parents understand the role and responsibility of the childminder regarding the protection of children. Disclosure and Barring Service checks for all relevant individuals have been successfully completed. The childminder completes risk assessments and takes action to minimise hazards to children for the home, garden and when on outings. She holds a current paediatric first-aid certificate and demonstrates she has the skills to give first aid treatment should the need arise.

The childminder's systems for monitoring and self-evaluation are not robust. Therefore, she is not always aware of her strengths and weaknesses, and is not able to address these effectively to improve her practice further. The childminder has not adequately addressed the recommendations from her last inspection, especially with regard to self-evaluation and quality improvements processes. There are some weaknesses with the childminder's monitoring of the learning and development of children. In particular, with regard to identifying children's precise next steps and tracking individual children's progress. Consequently, the childminder is unable to demonstrate how she measures and monitors children's progress and the effectiveness of her educational programmes over time. Therefore, the ongoing good development of the children is not assured.

The childminder understands the importance of communicating with parents from the start. She works flexibly to meet parents changing work patterns and personal circumstances and respects their wishes. She also keeps them up to date regarding their child's daily events, general learning and care needs through discussion. Written information from parents shows how they respect the childminder and they speak highly of the service she offers. The childminder understands the benefits of ensuring she maintains links between other professionals, such as with teachers. This ensures that she is able to complement children's learning and keep parents updated regarding any messages from school that relate to their child.

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	149356
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874958
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	9
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	09/11/2009
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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