

Inspection date	17/03/2014
Previous inspection date	14/12/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Teaching is good because the childminder understands how children learn and provides stimulating activities which are tailored to their needs and interests. As a result, children are making good progress.
- Children are developing strong bonds and attachments with the childminder and their peers. They have independent access to a range of interesting resources and they are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. As a result, children are happy and settled.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are strong. Information sharing is regularly encouraged and communication is well promoted to ensure that children are fully supported in their move from home and on to school. Consequently, children's learning and development is continuously promoted.
- Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a secure understanding of her role and responsibility in protecting children. Consequently, the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met effectively.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to further encourage children's developing communication and language skills by allowing them more time to respond to questions before asking the next.

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 childminder's house 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 took account of the views of parents, as recorded in written reference letters.
- The inspector reviewed the childminder's self-evaluation form as provided.

Inspector

Kate Hogan

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1981 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband in a house in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor, two bedrooms on the first floor and the garden are used for childminding. The childminder attends activities at the local children's centre. She visits soft play centres, parks, garden centres and shops on a regular basis. She collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently four children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions, of whom one is in the early years age group. The childminder operates all year round from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays and family holidays. She is a member of Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's developing speech and language skills, for example, by allowing adequate time for children to respond to questions.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder demonstrates a good understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observations and assessments are made to identify children's starting points, their progress and their next steps. There are comprehensive learning journal's in place that are shared with parents regularly. These clearly show how the child is making progress and are supported by lovely photographs and artwork by the child. The childminder flexibly plans activities based on the individual needs of the children and their interests and she ensures they cover all areas of learning. For example, for the current pirate theme the childminder has decorated her home with pirate bunting and the children have been taking part in activities such as treasure hunts, walking the plank, reading pirate books, learning pirate songs and practising writing pirate words. There is a good variety of inviting resources available which encourage children to use their imaginations when playing. The childminder promotes learning about other cultures, such as, Chinese New Year, Easter and Diwali. As a result, children are learning about the wider world around them. The childminder uses sign language to assist her teaching, which is especially useful for young children as they are using it as a tool to make themselves understood. She also continually asks challenging open-ended questions to the children. However, there is scope to further encourage children's developing speech and language skills by allowing children enough time to answer questions. The childminder celebrates birthdays for the children, which is a highlight for them as they get to have a party tea

with their friends and enjoy party games together. As a result, children are encouraged in their personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are challenged well during the time they spend with the childminder. For example, children are encouraged to work out the rhyming words when reading books by listening to the childminder reading one sentence and then trying to work out the word that rhymes. The childminder works with the local school to establish what their expectations are of children who are starting with them. She then helps children to reach these expectations by tailoring appropriate activities into their daily play. For example, by encouraging children to write their own names and understand letters and numbers both verbally and in writing. The childminder uses phonics in her everyday teaching and encourages children to begin to calculate simple sums. The childminder's outdoor area is large and has lots of equipment in it to aid children in developing physically. For example, there is a hopscotch, giant four in a row, swing and see saw among the activities on offer. Therefore, children are appropriately supported in all areas of learning and development and are beginning to be ready for school.

Partnerships with parents are well supported. The childminder shares information with the parents about how their children learn and are progressing. Plans and themes are shared and parents are encouraged via regular newsletters to extend learning at home. Learning journals are sent home frequently and parents are invited to comment in them. Parents are very happy with the childminder and are keen to confirm how well they feel their children are progressing since starting with her.

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

Children are happy, settled and well cared for as the childminder offers a calm and kind approach to each child. She encourages the children by giving them lots of praise and attention while they are with her. Children are given a sense of belonging in the childminder's home as she has photographs of who is attending each day and talks about those children not present and what they might be doing. Children behave well and manners are encouraged. For example, a child says 'please' when he wants his drink and 'thank you' afterwards. Positive behaviour is rewarded by stickers and verbal praise. The childminder encourages older children to work together and her home is a 'No bully zone'. As a result, children feel secure when spending time with the childminder and their emotional needs are met.

Children are forming lovely bonds and attachments with the childminder and their peers, for example, a child happily goes to the childminder for comfort and sits and listens intently holding her hand when she reads him a story. Children settle with the childminder quickly and without upset. This is because the childminder visits the family home prior to the child starting with her, which enables the children to get used to her in their own environment. Each family completes an 'All about me' form when they join which details key care information. Comprehensive settling-in sessions take place for each child. As a result, children transition to the childminder from their parents with ease and look forward

to their time spent at the childminder's home. There is a daily diary in place which details the welfare requirements of the children. Children's independence is actively promoted. For example, children are encouraged to do things for themselves, such as, cut their own fruit at snack time, wash their own hands, and place their shoes in the correct place in the home. Children's awareness of personal safety and risks is promoted, for example, when going into the garden, the childminder encourages younger children to go down the steps backwards. She also helps children to learn about keeping themselves safe every day in activities such as tidying up so as not to fall over toys and looking before crossing roads so as to teach road safety. As a result, children are learning how to keep themselves safe from harm.

The childminder promotes healthy lifestyles by providing well balanced food throughout the day. She encourages good hygiene routines by encouraging the children to wash their hands after playing and before eating, washing fruit before it is served and asking the children to put their hands over their mouths when coughing. All equipment at the childminder's home is easily accessible, clean and suitable for children to use. The children have access to daily fresh air and exercise. For example, the childminder has a large well thought out garden area with lots of resources in it which are used depending on the age of the children. She also takes the children to the park regularly and for walks around the town. As a result, children learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle to keep them well.

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

Children are well protected as the childminder has a clear understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. For example, the front door is locked securely and there are stairgates in place to stop children accessing areas they shouldn't be. Risk assessments are in place and regularly updated. For example, now that it is spring the childminder has checked the equipment in her garden in case it was damaged over the winter. The childminder has a high awareness of confidentiality and ensures that all children's data is kept secure and not discussed with others. The childminder shows a good understanding of safeguarding children in terms of signs of abuse and her safeguarding policy is thorough. There are many policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents. As a result, children are kept safe from harm while attending the childminder's home.

The childminder holds a first-aid qualification, food hygiene certificate and attends regular training courses to keep herself up to date on childcare legislation. She analyses the information she has learnt in courses to improve the quality of the childcare service which she provides. The childminder has improved since her last inspection by developing strong partnerships with other providers. She uses a self-evaluation to support continuous improvement and has firm ideas on what she would like to do in the future. For example, plans are in place to improve the garden playhouse area and she intends to attend more courses to keep herself up to date. The childminder attends a childminding network to further increase her awareness of the learning and development requirements.

Partnership with parents are very good. The childminder has received many reference and thank you letters over the years, including lovely letters from the children themselves. Parents' views are incorporated in to the setting as the childminder asks parents for regular feedback verbally on what they expect of her. Furthermore, she asks children if they like or dislike activities as they do them. This enables the childminder to shape future plans in order to get the best out of the children. Partnership with other providers and with other agencies are effective. The childminder has established efficient links with the local schools and outside agencies. For example, she regularly shares information with the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator at the school and in return she is given activities to do at home with children who are nearly ready to move onto school.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this 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		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	149656
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874973
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	4
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	14/12/2009
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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