

Inspection date	16/12/2014
Previous inspection date	27/04/2009

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

- Children achieve very well in their learning because the childminder has high expectations of them.
- The childminder keeps parents very well informed and involved in supporting their children's care and learning.
- Children are confident communicators. The childminder gives children every opportunity to hear and use language, and encourages them to develop a love for books and stories.
- Children make very positive relationships. They relate well to the childminder and show that they are settled and secure.
- The childminder has a high regard for children's safety. She regularly refreshes her knowledge about child protection, food safety, first aid and health awareness. This keeps children safe and well.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, the childminder does not use the most effective questioning techniques to encourage children's deeper thinking and problem-solving.

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 main play area and kitchen.
- The inspector looked at a selection of records and documents, including photographs of children joining in with different activities.
- The inspector spoke with the childminder and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability of all household members aged over 16.
- The inspector took account of parents' views expressed in written references.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

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 husband and adult child in a town house in Harpenden. The ground floor, first floor and a bedroom on the second floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family has a cat. The childminder takes children to and collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently two children on roll who are in the early years age group and attend on a part-time basis. The childminder operates all year round from 7.30am to 7pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays and family holidays. She is a member of the 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:

- extend the use of effective questioning techniques and strategies to more consistently promote children's ability to think critically and solve problems for themselves.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thrive because the childminder has high expectations of them. She has a secure knowledge of how children learn and plans a varied programme of play and learning based on what children already know and their interests. She makes useful observations which she uses effectively to identify children's next steps in learning and to assess their progress over time. She shares assessments with parents and other early years settings that children attend. This includes sharing ideas for activities and resources so that all those involved work towards a common goal. As a result, parents are equal partners in their children's learning.

Children demonstrate high levels of motivation and engagement. They have well-developed knowledge and skills for their age, particularly in communication and language. This equips them very well for the next stages in their learning. The childminder effectively supports their good progress by discreetly challenging them as they play. For example, while completing a clock puzzle, she encourages children to recognise numbers and to predict which numbers come next in sequence. Children develop an interest in letters and sounds because the childminder provides a large alphabet mat on which to play. She teaches them both the letter names and initial sounds. Children confidently recognise some letters and make links to family members whose names begin with those letters. She encourages their love of books by reading to them frequently and encouraging older children to read or tell stories to others. They use a range of apparatus and

equipment in the garden to develop their active physical skills. The childminder complements this with outings to local parks and takes them to specific activity clubs which she knows they enjoy and are good for their general physical development.

The childminder interacts well with children during adult-led activities and free play. She successfully engages their interest and motivates them to explore by being positive and enthusiastic in her approach. During a painting activity, she introduces new materials and media to create a large Christmas tree. She makes suggestions about how to use the sponges, brushes and paint, while still allowing children freedom to explore, develop their imagination and make their own representations. Children consequently explore different ways to use paint and foam shapes to print and make marks. They proudly describe their achievements and confidently express their views. However, on occasions the childminder does not maximise children's ability to think critically or solve problems. This is because she does not always model the language of thinking in the most effective way. Consequently, there is scope for the childminder to enhance the quality of teaching further by reflecting on the way that she phrases questions to support thinking.

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

The childminder works closely with parents to help children settle in. She gathers information on entry to ensure that she has a good understanding of children's personal care needs and routines. This enables her to provide care that is consistent with that given at home and for children to feel emotionally secure. As a result, children are very settled and enjoy positive relationships with the childminder. She sets very clear expectations for children's behaviour and discusses individual needs with parents. She is generous with giving children individual attention and praise, and encourages them to take responsibility. Therefore, children develop self-confidence and learn to do things independently. For example, they are keen to dress themselves, clean the painting table and dispose of rubbish in the appropriate way. The childminder continues to liaise well with parents to support children's eventual transition to pre-school, nursery or school. She develops good relationships with school staff and ensures that she promptly passes on relevant information concerning children's well-being. She uses a daily diary to record in detail an accurate summary of the day. Therefore, parents are well informed and feel reassured that their children are safe and well.

The childminder successfully promotes children's good health. She teaches them how to clean their hands, faces and brush their teeth. She is experienced and well trained to manage individual dietary needs. Children enjoy regular exercise in the fresh air, which is important for their overall well-being. The childminder uses outings as opportunities to talk to children about road safety and allay their fears by showing them how to behave around animals. Children use a good range of suitable resources and equipment. The childminder rotates the toys according to children's current interests and developmental needs, and involves them in the process of making decisions. This ensures they are well motivated and confident.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

The childminder understands her responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She ensures that parents are aware of her policies and procedures from the start and she keeps appropriate records for the safe and efficient management of the setting. The childminder has a secure knowledge and understanding of how to safeguard children. She refreshes her knowledge of child protection, first aid and food safety at regular intervals. She keeps a good range of supporting information readily to hand so that she can respond swiftly to any concerns or incidents relating to children's welfare. Children are kept safe because she carries out effective risk assessments and ensures all adults in the household are suitable.

The childminder monitors the educational programme well. She links children's assessments to approved guidance to reflect on whether the programme of activities and learning effectively meets the needs of the children attending. The childminder adapts her practice according to parents' wishes. For example, she accommodates their needs by taking children to specific activity clubs. The childminder is suitably committed to on-going professional development. She keeps abreast of current guidance through her membership of professional childminding organisations and through positive partnerships with local children's centres. She develops further knowledge and skills by attending training courses. This has a positive impact on children's learning and enables her to sustain continuous improvement. She is aware of the benefits of fostering professional working partnerships with other settings children may attend, to promote consistency in their early learning experiences. Parents are typically full of praise for the childminder. They confirm that their children make rapid progress within the setting and are very safe and happy.

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	219662
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	865802
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	2
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	27/04/2009
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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