

Inspection date	16/01/2014
Previous inspection date	13/01/2009

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

- The childminder uses effective teaching strategies to support children's emerging speech and language. She provides a narrative of what children do and models language very clearly to give them the understanding and words needed to communicate well.
- The childminder considers children's individual preferences very thoroughly when planning suitable activities and outings. This means children enjoy learning and are well motivated.
- Relationships at every level are strong. Babies and children make secure emotional attachments and very much enjoy the company of the childminder.
- The childminder has a robust knowledge of all requirements and closely monitors and evaluates practice to ensure it consistently meets children's needs.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to provide more practical, child-initiated activities to further support children's emergent writing and number skills.
- There are opportunities to gather more extensive information from parents when a child first enters the setting in order to more quickly build an accurate picture of the child and establish their starting point.

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 the kitchen.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures, learning records and photographs of children joining in with different activities.
- The inspector spoke with the childminder and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents expressed in evaluation forms and references.
- The inspector checked evidence of the childminder's qualifications and suitability of household members aged over 16.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2005 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and one child aged seven years in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the maisonette is used for childminding and there is access to a communal garden.

The childminder attends toddler and activity groups for children and uses the local children's centre on a regular basis. She collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. The childminder supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently two children on roll who are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder operates all year round from 8am to 6pm, 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:

- introduce more practical, child-initiated literacy and numeracy activities that give children the opportunity to practise using emergent writing and recording numbers in play situations
- gather more extensive information on entry from parents about all aspects of their children's care, development, home life and family background in order to more rapidly form an accurate starting point for children's care and learning.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder plans a wide programme of activities and outings which she evaluates carefully to ensure children make good progress in all areas of learning. Plans are flexible to meet children's changing interests, moods and individual stages of development. The childminder knows the children well and tunes in to their particular needs to ensure they are suitably challenged or supported. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's learning and have regular opportunities to view children's learning journey records and meet with the childminder during the evenings to discuss their progress and any issues or concerns. In addition, the childminder provides continuity in learning for those children that attend other early years settings. She finds out what topics and

learning takes place and uses this information to plan complementary activities to consolidate and extend children's learning. For example, to help children gain the foundation skills in literacy and numeracy that are essential for the next stage of their learning, she encourages children to practise writing letter shapes, numbers and their name. Children are keen to do this, and thus well prepared for learning in school, but there is a tendency for these activities to be somewhat adult-directed. There is, therefore, potential to provide further resources and encouragement for children to initiate these skills in imaginative role play situations, such as writing shopping lists, menus, bills and orders. Younger children have frequent opportunities to explore paint. They show a developing interest in using their fingers, hands, sponges and brushes to make marks on paper, which is an important introduction to early writing.

The childminder ably teaches babies and young children to communicate well. She clearly models language and provides a narrative of what children do so that they begin to make links between speech and its meaning. The childminder provides plenty of opportunities for children to explore books and sing songs and rhymes. Children listen with interest and are keen to name new words and make corresponding animal sounds. She demonstrates how to hold the books and turn the pages so that children understand how to take care of them. Children who are familiar with hearing a second language at home have opportunities to hear and use this simply within the setting because the childminder sometimes uses greetings, songs and counts in French.

The childminder helps children to make relationships and socialise with other young children by regularly taking them to toddler and activity groups. She sensitively plans these around their interests and takes account of the different ways that children prefer to learn and their stage of development. For example, she takes children who are passive learners, and who have the capacity to listen and join in with a group, to music and singing activity sessions. For those that prefer to learn more actively, she takes them to gymnastic-based activity sessions that enable them to develop gross motor skills using a range of soft play and balancing equipment while also learning to take turns with other children. This personalised approach to teaching ensures that all children enjoy learning and develop high levels of motivation.

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

Children evidently build secure emotional attachments to the childminder and show through their behaviour and body language that they feel safe and secure. The childminder finds out about children's individual personal care needs and routines through discussion with their parents on entry to the setting. This provides the essential information needed in order to meet children's needs and help them to settle. However, there is scope to gather more precise detail about children's family background, culture and home life on entry in order to rapidly build a complete picture of the child to use as a starting point for future care and learning. As children prepare to move on to nursery or school, the childminder talks to them about what to expect so that they feel emotionally prepared to cope with the change. She helps them to manage tasks independently, such as managing to put on and fasten their shoes and taking responsibility for organising the

table at meal times, in readiness for the tasks they will be expected to manage in school.

The childminder has high expectations for children's behaviour. Children understand these from a young age because they are frequently explained and reinforced. For example, she consistently encourages children to use good manners so that children automatically say 'please', 'thank you' and 'excuse me' at appropriate times. Children are willing to help with tidying away the toys because this is consistently part of their daily routine. The play area is well organised so that children can access toy boxes easily and they know where things belong. This builds their cooperation and independence. Children's belongings are well organised in the hallway to encourage them to find their outdoor shoes and coats easily and begin to take responsibility for their own needs.

The childminder provides a well-balanced menu of meals and always offers some degree of choice. For example, children have a choice of different types of bread to have with a meal of cauliflower cheese and salad and they select a preferred piece of fruit from the fruit bowl. The childminder generally cooks meals in advance so that they are quickly available to satisfy children's hearty appetites. Good hygiene is consistently promoted. Children learn to wash their hands at appropriate times and use tissues to wipe their noses. They benefit from regular fresh air and exercise when playing outdoors or walking to the park. The childminder sets clear boundaries when children use the communal garden so that they quickly understand which areas are safe to play in while also supervising them closely. She displays visual pictures and photographs to remind children about how to avoid certain dangers around the home. Furthermore, she reinforces children's understanding of how to keep safe by encouraging them to make a book with their drawings and photographs to illustrate the fire evacuation procedure.

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and keeps efficient records and policies to reflect her practice. The childminder has a high regard for keeping children safe. She demonstrates that she knows how to recognise signs of child abuse and take appropriate action to report any concerns to the relevant agencies. She ensures that all adults in the household are suitably vetted and monitors visitors to the home so that children are never unsupervised when they are present. The childminder assesses the risks to children within the home and when planning activities or outings, and takes appropriate steps to minimise any danger. This means they can play and explore in a safe and secure environment.

The childminder continues to develop her knowledge and skills by seeking out training and new ways of working. Since the last inspection, she has attended training sessions on the Early Years Foundation Stage, safeguarding children, first aid and children's speech and language. In addition, she refreshes her knowledge by doing online training modules. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching overall and on children's safety and well-being. She works closely with other childminders and local children's centres in order to share good practice and ideas, as well as frequently sourcing ideas for activities from the

internet. This keeps her practice fresh and interesting for the children. The childminder evaluates her practice well. She regularly reviews and monitors how well children are progressing in their learning and development, and whether there is a need to adapt the planned curriculum. In doing so, she takes account of the views of parents and children. She gives parents evaluation forms at regular intervals and encourages children to complete child-centred questionnaires with their parents to establish whether improvements are needed. These methods of self-evaluation mean there is a good capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

Parents are kept well informed about all aspects of the service. The childminder has developed a new parent information leaflet to give a broad overview of her key policies, in addition to which they receive some written information about the early years curriculum. Parents report that they find the daily diaries and evening discussion meetings very helpful as a means of sharing information and they are extremely satisfied with the service provided. The childminder has not had the need to work in partnership with other professionals to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities but demonstrates a good knowledge of how to do so. However, she has developed professional partnerships with key staff at other early years settings that children attend.

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. 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	EY302058
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	861769
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	13/01/2009
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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
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