

Inspection date

22/05/2014

Previous inspection date

18/02/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

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's language skills are well supported. This is because the childminder uses effective teaching strategies, such as open-ended questions. As a result, children's thoughts are extended, so that they make good progress in their language development.
- Children are safeguarded because the childminder has a clear understanding of her role and responsibility. She effectively implements policies and procedures that ensure children are kept safe.
- Children are settled because they have formed close bonds and attachments with the childminder, her co-childminder and assistants. There is a relaxed, friendly atmosphere and children are treated as part of the family.
- The childminder constantly reflects on her practice with her co-childminder and assistants. The childminder ensures any training undertaken is shared, so that they all benefit from the knowledge gained.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to extend opportunities to promote older children's literacy further, so that this is more sharply focused to support their emerging writing skills.
- There is room to strengthen the partnerships with parents further, so that they contribute to the planning cycle and share more information about their children's learning and development 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 spoke to the childminder and children at appropriate times. She looked at a selection of policies and children's records. She also checked evidence of suitability for all adults living and working on the premises.
- The inspector observed children during their play and during an adult-led activity. She also observed the interactions between the children and childminder, her co-childminder and her assistants.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of the play activities with the childminder.
- The inspector took into account parents' views through parents' questionnaires and 'thank you' cards left with the childminder.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2005 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She works with another childminder and two assistants at her parents-in-law's house. The childminder's one-year-old child attends the setting. The premises is situated in Bedmond, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor, which includes a cloakroom and a playroom, is used for childminding. Bedrooms upstairs are also used for sleep and rest purposes. There is an enclosed garden as well as an adjoining field for outside play. The family has a dog, fish, ducks and chickens. There are currently 28 children on roll, who are all in the early years age group. They attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder operates all year round from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder and her assistants have an early years qualification at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the educational programme for literacy even further by ensuring, for example, resources are easily available for children to write for a purpose
- strengthen further the partnerships with parents, so that they contribute to the assessment and planning cycle, such as sharing more information about what children are learning at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are happy and enjoy their time spent with the childminder. Since her last inspection, she has effectively developed her knowledge regarding the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has reflected on her practice and has implemented changes to the observations, assessment and planning of activities. The childminder uses good teaching techniques, such as clear explanations and open-ended questions, to extend children's thoughts and ideas. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development. Information regarding children's individual needs, routines and interests are obtained when they first start. This information is effectively used, along with the childminder's own observations, to ascertain children's starting points. This is then linked to the flexible planning. Continuous monitoring through purposeful observations means that the childminder is very aware of the next steps in children's learning and their overall development. The childminder also completes the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years to ascertain their development. This is shared with parents, so that they can discuss their child's progression. Learning journals are

freely available for parents to view. Information about children's care and learning is shared regularly with parents through daily discussions. However, the childminder has not yet fully included what children learn at home in her day-day planning, so that this can also be used to support the next steps in their learning.

Children display good characteristics of effective learning as they freely help themselves to the resources set out for them. The conservatory and playroom are attractively laid out, so that children can independently access a variety of resources. In particular, children love imaginative play and pretend to have a picnic. They cooperatively play together and solve problems as they go. The quality of teaching is good and the childminder understands that children learn best through play. The childminder intervenes as necessary to successfully support their play. Great excitement occurs as a deer is spotted in the adjoining field. The childminder's good interactions means that children's curiosity and language is effectively supported. For example, they talk about what the deer may be eating and where it may live. Discussions continue, with the childminder paying attention to each child's contribution, so that they feel valued and learn new vocabulary. She listens and responds with interest to each child's contribution. This supports children's personal, social and emotional development well. Children's emerging language is also well supported through the regular singing of favourite nursery rhymes and songs. Toddlers show that they are developing good skills for their future learning. For example, they happily copy the actions demonstrated by the childminder and repeat what she says. The childminder introduces phonics, so that older children develop skills to aid their readiness for school. This extends their learning related to communication and language

Children enjoy spending time with the childminder, who interacts extremely well with them. For example, she helps them to think about the activities that they are doing by offering explanations and lots of praise. They demonstrate that they are active learners when they take part in the varied range of art and craft activities. For example, they concentrate for long periods when they create pictures related to a popular song. They confidently use glue spreaders and paint to create their pictures. The childminder provides a running commentary and assists as necessary, without taking over from children's learning. Although, pens and pencils are provided during some adult-led activities, these are not always freely available, so that children can easily access these. This means that opportunities to support older children's emerging writing skills, such as drawing or writing for a purpose, are not fully maximised. Books are easily available and play a key part in children's activities. For example, stories are regularly read to children, so that they can see that print carries meaning. This prepares children for the next stage in their learning, such as starting nursery or school. The childminder helps children to learn about numbers and how to count through everyday activities and singing number related songs. Children also take part in activities to extend their curiosity, such as the hand rearing of chickens and ducks. Simple gardening is also introduced, such as the planting of seeds. This supports children's physical development. Children learn to care for their growing flowers and learn some aspects of numeracy skills, such as measurement.

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

Children enjoy warm relationships with the childminder. They show that they have secure attachments with her when they snuggle up to her for a cuddle. Children are treated as part of the family and therefore, develop strong attachments. New children are effectively supported in settling as the childminder works with parents to gain a good understanding of each child's needs and routines. For example, the childminder mirrors home routines, such as sleep patterns. This helps children to make a comfortable and smooth transition from home into the childminder's care. Children know the familiar routines. This also helps them to feel secure. For example, they know to wash their hands before mealtimes. This means that children develop good self-care skills. This contributes to children's independence as they move on in their learning, such as starting nursery or school. The childminder is very attentive to their needs and moods and responds appropriately. She recognises when children may be getting tired or frustrated and talks to them about how they are feeling.

Children are encouraged to behave well and clear boundaries contribute to this. For example, clear explanations are provided and effective strategies, such as reward charts, are used to help children to manage their feelings. Consistent messages from the childminder, her co-childminder and her assistants means that children learn right from wrong. The childminder is a positive role model for children and those working alongside her. She leads by example to support children's social and emotional development. For example, she listens attentively to children and is always calm when communicating with them. Praise is used effectively to develop children's self-esteem and as a result, they are confident to 'have a go' and try new learning experiences. As a result, all children actively take part in activities, they cooperatively play with each other and happily share their toys. Resources are varied and of good quality. An area in the playroom is dedicated to babies. This means that they can play safely without the interruption of older toddlers. A large table provides additional space for children to enjoy table top activities, such as art and craft activities.

Children are developing a positive approach to healthy eating. The childminder works closely with parents to ensure that dietary needs are well known and met. Any meals provided by parents are suitably stored. The childminder's team work well together to ensure that mealtimes run smoothly and efficiently. For example, children are assisted as necessary, so that they develop independent eating skills. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion and good manners are encouraged. The childminder reminds children to have regular drinks, so that they remain hydrated during their day. Children's understanding of safety is promoted during the routine of the day. For example, older children are aware they need to keep smaller toys away from toddlers, so that they are kept safe. Children enjoy indoor and outdoor activities to support their physical development. For example, they enjoy using large play equipment and bicycles in the garden. The field is frequently used for running games. Indoors, children enjoy dancing to music and exploring the use of tunnels. As a result, children have varied opportunities to take risks in their play. Overall, they are well supported to develop an understanding of the importance of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

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

The childminder has a secure understanding of her legal responsibilities to implement the welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ensures that children are safe and secure. The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of safeguarding children procedures, such as possible symptoms of children at risk and how to respond to concerns. She ensures her co-childminder and assistants are also very familiar with the procedures to follow, so that children are safeguarded. A detailed policy is easily available for reference and is regularly reviewed to ensure the contents are always up to date. The childminder carries out daily risk assessments to ensure all areas and resources used by children are suitable for them. This means that children can move freely and safely within the premises. They are equally kept safe when they go outside to play.

Since the last inspection, the childminder has successfully built upon her knowledge regarding monitoring children's progress, so that they achieve their full potential. This enables her to identify her own targets for future development across the whole provision. In addition, she carries out appraisals for her colleagues, so that areas to develop are discussed and agreed upon. She is very well organised and works effectively with her team. For example, they identify training needs and regularly share information gained from courses that they attend. As a result, children benefit from a continually improving setting. The actions and recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. For example, all necessary permissions from parents are now obtained, so that children's needs are effectively managed. The childminder has evaluated her practice. Views of her colleagues, parents and children are fully included. For example, a daily diary of children's activities has recently been introduced as a result of feedback from parents. This contributes further to the continuity of care between children's parents and the childminder.

Parents state that the childminder and her colleagues are friendly, approachable and that they offer a flexible service. The childminder's policies and procedures are easily available for parents to see, so that they have an understanding of the practice. She is aware of the need to form positive working relationships other provisions where children attend. For example, when children first start at nursery, she shares information with staff about children's welfare and learning needs. This sharing of information continues throughout children's time at nursery, so that there is a continuity of care and learning between both parties. The childminder has also established links with schools where children may attend. Some teachers have been to visit the setting, so that they can meet the children who are moving onto school. This supports a smooth transition when the time comes. The childminder has started to make links with the nearby children's centre. She is investigating the services they provide, so that her knowledge to promote children's welfare and learning continually develops.

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	EY309382
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	965117
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	15
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	18/02/2009
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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