

Inspection date	22/05/2013
Previous inspection date	04/02/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
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 is satisfactory

- Children settle very quickly into the setting and are happy in the childminder's care because she has well-thought-out settling-in procedures which enable her to form caring relationships with the children and their families from the onset.
- The childminder enables children to make sound progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Children behave well in the setting because they have very clear boundaries that are shared with parents to help children to receive consistent messages. As a result, they are considerate to others.
- Children's independence is given a high priority and positive steps are taken to help them achieve this.

It is not yet good because

- The childminder does not consistently assess or identify children's next steps or fully understand how to shape learning experiences. Therefore, planned activities are not sufficiently focused to maximise children's learning.
- Partnership working with other settings is not fully developed to ensure children benefit from a shared understanding between all those involved with their learning and development.
- Opportunities for younger children to use pictures and photographs so that they can express preferences and thoughts about their activities are limited.

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 children's activities in the childminder's home and garden, which included a meal time. She spoke to the children and engaged in their play.
- The inspector spoke to the childminder at appropriate times and looked at a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and read their comments submitted in questionnaires and references.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full Report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2002 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and adult child near St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole ground floor of the house, which includes a cloakroom, is used for childminding. A bedroom upstairs is also used. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The family has a dog.

The childminder attends age-appropriate groups with children. She takes and collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently five children on roll in the early years age group, who attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder operates all year round from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays and family holidays agreed in advance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the methods for promoting children's progress by increasing knowledge of ongoing assessment and the role of the adult in shaping children's learning experiences, so that the next steps for progression are consistently targeted
- develop the partnership with other providers where children attend so that a regular two-way flow of information is shared to support children's care, learning and development needs.

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

- develop further the use of pictures and photographs showing people who are special to children and that show familiar events, objects and activities, so that they can further express preferences, thoughts and feelings about their activities.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder provides children with a warm and welcoming environment where they feel safe and secure and their emotional well-being is promoted. Parents are asked to provide information about their child's interests and routines on registration. Continual

discussions with parents about what children are doing at home enables the childminder to gain a suitable understanding of children's initial starting points and their learning needs. She is developing a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She completes regular observations, including the progress check at age two, and has shared this with parents. Children's learning journeys contain information, including annotated photographs, individual work and many written observations. These are supported by the childminder's knowledge of what each child can do. However, her methods to evaluate the observations and assessments are not robust enough to identify children's next steps in their learning and plan accordingly. As a result, activities are sometimes not fully maximised to extend children's learning and development. Therefore, children make satisfactory, rather than good progress.

Children generally enjoy a range of activities across the seven areas of learning, which are planned based on the time of year and their developing interests. For example, recently children enjoyed creating pictures related to a popular story. These, along with other artwork, are attractively displayed in the hall and in the childminder's dining area. This promotes children's self-esteem and provides opportunities for them to use a selection of materials and tools, such as glue and paint. The organisation of each day and the presentation of toys and resources enable children to make independent choices about what they would like to play with and how they spend their time. For example, they freely choose to play 'shops' and to use drawing materials. They help themselves to pens to colour in pre-printed sheets of various child-related topics. The childminder also plans activities, such as painting and sticking, to enable children freely express their individual creativity. However, younger children tend to follow older children's play ideas, and photographs of activities and familiar items are not used as well as possible. This means younger children have fewer opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings about activities.

Children enjoy imaginative play, such as using the good quality 'shop'. During this time young children explore the cash till so that they learn how to operate simple toys. Children readily count during their play and have fun as they count their steps when they jump. Recently the childminder has introduced children to growing items in the family's newly acquired allotment. This means that children are developing an understanding of the world around them. Photographs displayed in the hall show children planting and watering potatoes at the allotment. During the inspection, children planted seeds to grow pumpkins. They learn how to care for these, such as remembering to water the seeds, through discussions with the childminder. However, she misses further opportunities to extend their learning as she is not fully familiar with the role of the adult in providing more challenges in children's learning. Children freely play outdoors and enjoy filling containers with sand and digging in soil. They attend age-appropriate groups where they can socialise with similar aged children. During these times, children enjoy joining in with group activities, such as singing and group games. This means that they benefit from being in different environments and develop good social skills. Children also help to collect the older children from school and are very excited about going to 'big school' when they are old enough. This shows children have a positive view about moving to their next stage of learning.

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

Children enjoy warm relationships with the childminder, particularly older children as they have been attending from a young age. She spends time talking and listening to them so that they feel valued. Newer children are helped to feel secure by calm, consistent reassurance. Settling-in procedures are flexible and the childminder takes time to ensure individual routines, needs and interests are well known. This means she can meet their individual care routines effectively. As a result, children are given time to get to know the childminder and become familiar with their surroundings, resulting in them feeling safe and secure in her care. Daily diaries are used for younger children to keep parents fully informed about their children's activities. This means that there is a continuity of care between parents and the childminder.

Children play and learn in a safe and secure environment. Good quality toys and resources are easily available to enable children to self-select, further promoting their sense of belonging and independence. As a result, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The childminder makes good use of the local toy library to ensure there are always different toys of interest available for children. They develop an awareness of acceptable behaviour because the childminder has clear expectations in place. Good relationships are encouraged so that children learn to be kind and considerate to each other. They learn to share and take turns, passing the toys to each other when playing with the shop and sand. As a result, children develop good social skills as they learn to play cooperatively. This contributes effectively to preparing children for the next stage in their learning, such as sharing with others when they start nursery or school.

Children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe in the setting because the childminder reminds them what is expected of them, such as the importance of not jumping on the sofa. She teaches children to gain an awareness of how to keep themselves safe when on outings. Children have access to the garden in fine weather where they enjoy playing with sand. They enjoy visits to parks and animal farms where they can practise their physical skills and take supervised risks in their play. This contributes positively to their physical health and well-being. Children demonstrate a secure understanding of their own health and self-care needs. For example, they make their own sandwiches, choosing a healthy filling. Older children independently attend to their personal care routines. These skills help promote their self-help skills.

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

The childminder's knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements is sound and she gives high priority to promoting children's safety. She has a good awareness of child protection issues. A clear safeguarding policy informs parents of her responsibility to act on any concerns she may have about the children in her care. Children are always supervised and the childminder ensures children's safety is promoted, both in the home and on outings. Risk assessments are conducted to minimise any hazards. However, the childminder is less secure in her understanding of the learning and development

requirements, particularly the assessment of children's learning priorities.

The childminder monitors her practice and involves parents and children's views in the process. Since the last inspection, she has developed her monitoring procedures. She now uses a diary to record ideas for development and has completed an informative evaluation of her practice. The childminder has also completed a childcare qualification, and this has raised her awareness of carrying out purposeful activities with children. The children benefit from the relationships developed between the childminder and their parents. They discuss the children's routines and achievements each day when parents collect their children. This means that parents are involved in their children's learning.

Parents state they are very happy with the care provided by the childminder. They say that she provides a 'home from home environment' and that their children enjoy attending. The childminder understands the need to develop partnerships with other providers where children attend. She has introduced herself to key persons and, generally, shares information about children's needs. However, this partnership is not fully developed so that there is a regular two-way flow of information. This means children's ongoing learning and development are not fully supported to ensure they make the best progress possible. All required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the childminder's practice are in place. These are regularly reviewed so that all information is up to date.

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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
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 inspected again within 12 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	EY385065
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	878935
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	5
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	04/02/2010
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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