

Inspection date	28/01/2014
Previous inspection date	06/07/2010

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 are provided with a varied range of interesting and age-appropriate activities and experiences, including purposeful outings. As a result, they make good progress in their learning and development.
- Children have consistency and continuity as the childminder works closely with parents to ensure their care and learning needs are met.
- Children form secure attachments with the childminder and her family. She provides a caring and supportive environment for them and there are appropriate safeguarding procedures in place to protect them.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is room to further develop the partnership with other providers where children attend, so that children's learning and development is shared more and used to further support children's learning.
- There are further opportunities to enhance children's independence and self-care skills during lunch and snack times.

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 children during their play and during lunch and a snack time. She also observed the interactions between children and the childminder.
- The inspector spoke to children and the childminder at appropriate times. She looked at a selection of policies, the self-evaluation and children's records. She also checked evidence of suitability for all adults living on the premises.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of the play activities with the childminder.
- The inspector took into account parents' views through parent questionnaires.

Inspector

Maura Pigram

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1992. She is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and two adult children in Watford, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor, which includes a cloakroom and a playroom on the first floor are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The family has a tortoise and fish as pets.

The childminder attends age-appropriate groups with children. She takes and collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently three children on roll, who are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. She operates all year round from 7.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday, except bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder is a member of a local childminding group.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide further opportunities for children to be involved in the preparation and serving of food and drinks, so that their independence and confidence in their own abilities can be extended
- develop further the partnership with other providers where children attend, so that information about what children are learning is shared and used to further support their learning.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. She is very experienced and has a good understanding of how children learn and develop. She has cared for many children from a young age and remains in contact with them and their families when they leave her welcoming home. Through discussions with parents and regular observations the childminder is able to understand what children know and what they can do. She plans age and stage appropriate activities for each child, taking into account their interests and next steps in their learning. As a result, all children make good, individual progress in their learning. The quality of teaching is good and the childminder understands that children learn best through play. For example, she skilfully uses children's interests to help them develop and make connections in their learning. Recently, children enjoyed making trains from cardboard boxes. They play co-operatively together as they drive their individual trains to their destinations. Good

quality interactions, such as the use of stickers for tickets and open-ended questions mean that children's language and understanding is effectively promoted. Children display good characteristics of effective learning as they freely help themselves to adhesive tape to 'fix my train'. They concentrate on how to successfully use the tape so that they achieve their task. The childminder joins in with their play. She assists them as necessary and extends their thoughts and ideas. For example, she helps children recall events, such as outings on trains and buses that they have experienced together. These outings are well-managed so that every opportunity is taken to promote children's learning. This promotes children's understanding of the world around them.

Children demonstrate they are active learners as they help themselves to various play items, such as jigsaws. Older children problem solve as they go and help each other choose pieces of jigsaw to complete the picture. This contributes to the next steps in their education, particularly as they become independent and inquisitive, ready for the move to full-time school. Children's communication is well supported. For example, the childminder provides a running commentary and younger children copy what she says. This supports younger children's language development. Children love books and the childminder fosters this enjoyment by taking them to the library regularly. They have opportunities to choose books and bring them home to share with their families. The childminder's flexible routine includes 'story time'. During this time they make themselves comfortable on the sofa and enjoy listening to the childminder read popular books. Children are encouraged to join in as they point to pictures and talk about what is happening in the story. This further supports children's language development and they can see that print carries meaning. Children help themselves to pens, pencils and stickers to decorate their 'trains'. This supports children's emerging writing skills. The childminder helps children to learn about numbers and how to count through everyday activities. In addition, baking activities are often carried out. During these times children are introduced to weighing and measuring concepts and all children are fully involved in the process.

The childminder has a close but professional partnership with parents. She gathers information from them when their children first start, such as, their routines, interests and individual needs. Daily communication through discussions and the sharing of children's learning journals means that children's changing needs are well known. The childminder monitors children's progress well. This includes the 'progress check at age two' to ascertain children's development. Each child has a learning journal which contains written observations and details of the child's progress. Photographs and examples of children's achievements are also included. These are shared with parents, so that they are aware of their progress. Comments from parents are valued and regular discussions means that parents are able to contribute to their children's learning.

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

Children are treated as part of the family and therefore, develop strong attachments with the childminder. Children chat happily alongside the childminder showing that they are confident and secure. The childminder tailors the settling-in process to meet each child's individual needs. She works closely with parents offering advice and support related to

their children's care, as and when needed. This contributes further to the close partnership with parents. The childminder offers a range of good quality resources and activities for children. These are carefully selected to meet their stage of development and particular interests. The childminder provides daily opportunities for children to experience various activities. For example, they spend time outdoors playing in the garden and visit parks, including those further afield. Children have opportunities to mix with similar aged children. For example, they attend age-appropriate groups and meet up with other like-minded childminders and children that they care for. This means that children benefit from being in different environments. This also supports transitions to other settings as children grow.

Children are encouraged to behave well and clear boundaries contribute effectively to this. For example, children know to take off their shoes when they come indoors and older children are considerate to their younger peers. 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. The childminder has a calm manner and always explains reasons for her requests. As a result, the consistent messages help children learn right from wrong. Children are encouraged to develop good hygiene procedures. For example, they know where to get tissues from to blow their noses and their independence in seeing to their personal hygiene is promoted.

Children's dietary needs and preferences are well known. The childminder works very closely with parents to ensure that meals offered are suitable and changing habits in eating patterns are well known. This contributes further to the continuity of care between children's parents and the childminder. Meals are eaten at the family table and social skills are effectively encouraged. During these times children take some of the responsibilities, such as placing individual mats that children have made, on the table. However, there is scope to involve children more consistently in the preparation of meals and snacks, so that their independent skills are further developed. For example, children have limited opportunities to pour their own drinks or to prepare their own fruit. Children's understanding of safety is promoted during the routine of the day. Gentle reminders ensure children are considerate of each other during their play. For example, when playing with their 'train boxes' they are reminded to give each other space to play safely. Children are able to take supervised risks in their play when they visit parks and soft play areas. They learn about road safety when on outings and walking to and from school.

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

The childminder has a clear understanding of her legal responsibilities to implement the welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure that children are safe and secure. She 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 knowledge is up to date by attending short courses and sharing good practice with a local childminding network group. She is always professional and maintains confidentiality at all times. She ensures her policies and

procedures contain all the relevant information needed to protect children. These are regularly reviewed to ensure the contents are always up to date. The home and garden are well-maintained and the childminder follows clear outings procedures to ensure children remain safe at all times.

Since the last inspection the childminder has increased her knowledge about how children learn and develop. Information from this and short courses attended are effectively used in her day-to-day practice, such as the completion of children's assessments. She regularly shares good practice related to children's welfare and learning with other members of the childminding network group. For example, they often organise group activities together to promote children's learning, such as baking bread. In addition, the childminder makes purposeful visits to the nearby children's centre where children enjoy musical sessions. The childminder monitors her whole provision, including the educational programmes, through self-evaluation. This results in children benefitting from continuous improvements being made. Parents and children's views are welcome and valued; these are obtained through discussion and purposeful questionnaires.

Parents' comments are positive. They state that their children 'benefit from the socialisation opportunities'. They praise the childminder for providing a 'good start' for their children. The childminder's policies and procedures are easily available for parents to see, so that they have an understanding of the practice. The childminder is aware of the need to form positive working relationships with 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. However, this ongoing communication is not as strong as it could be so that children's learning and development, that is taking place outside of the setting, is fully supported. There are no children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attending. However, the childminder values partnership working with specialist professionals and the impact this can have on children's welfare and learning.

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	130474
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	871002
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	3
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	06/07/2010
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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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