

Inspection date	28/01/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	2 Not Applicable
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 consistently uses ongoing observations to identify children's next steps in learning. She makes accurate assessments that fully support children in making good progress in the prime and specific areas of learning.
- Children benefit from the well-established and effective partnerships with parents, which help to meet their individual care needs.
- The childminder reflects on her practice and identifies the minor weaknesses. She takes swift action to implement improvements, and therefore, secure continuous improvement in the provision for children.
- The childminder has a good understanding of how to protect children. This ensures that they are kept safe in her care.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance the way in which information about children's starting points is gathered from parents, particularly for babies.

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 sitting room and kitchen and reflected on children's learning through play with the childminder.
- The inspector, childminder and children had conversations at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation related to the day-to-day organisation of the setting, children's progress and self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents from information provided by the childminder and a letter from a parent.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of childminder and other household members aged over 16 years.

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and children aged five years and two years in Royston, Hertfordshire. The childminder uses the whole of the ground floor, one bedroom and the rear garden for childminding. The family have a dog and two rabbits. The childminder attends toddler groups and activities at the local children's centre. She visits the shops and park on a regular basis. She collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently four children on roll, three of whom are in the early years age group and 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. 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:

- enhance the methods used to gather information from parents on children's starting points to better establish children's early achievements.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder has a very secure knowledge of how children learn and develop skills through play. As a result, she uses a variety of teaching methods that support children in making good progress towards the early learning goals. Children engage well and enjoy the activities because the childminder provides things they find interesting, challenging and fun. The childminder effectively promotes children's communication skills by encouraging and responding to their speech. The childminder listens attentively to children and values what they have to say. Children have plenty of opportunities to choose what they do and the childminder ensures she is close by. This means she supports learning when children are most interested and are, therefore, most likely to gain from the activity. Children enjoy familiar books; the childminder provides those identified by parents as particular favourites. Consequently, children concentrate well and join in, following the story and pointing to images on the page. The childminder uses questions to develop children's understanding and give them the chance to show what they know. Children like to sit cuddled up with the childminder when they read, showing the close bond that has developed. Children show curiosity about their environment and the world around them. The childminder uses this to develop children's skills. Very young children are already confident using the toy computer, pushing the buttons to make sounds and using the

mouse correctly. They solve their own problems by watching others and trying out different strategies. While playing with the toy post box a child has trouble getting the letters through the slot. The child opts to open the front of the box and put the letters in, copying the actions of the childminder when she opens the box to remove the letters.

The childminder is frequently observing children when they play. She makes an assessment about children's particular stage of development, any new or emerging skills they are demonstrating and decides on possible next steps for learning. She uses these assessments to plan specific activities and opportunities and is mindful of how some skills can be developed through the children's self-chosen play. The childminder is using some topics linked children's interests, festivals and national events. Recently children have enjoyed finding out about and watching the garden birds and are preparing for National Storytelling week. The childminder offers activities linked to topics but only pursues those that really grab children's interest and imagination. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

The childminder involves parents in children's learning by sharing progress information. She gathers information about children's abilities and interests from parents to help her plan suitable activities. However, the information on the youngest children is mostly based on her assessments rather than details from parents. The childminder has a particular system for gathering the information but this has proved to be more difficult to use with very young children. There is scope to improve this so the childminder has details that are more relevant on children's stage of development and preferences for particular play when she first looks after them. The childminder keeps parents up to date using electronic communications as this has proved more effective than traditional diaries. She shares information with staff at others and this ensures continuity for children and enables her to follow up learning opportunities to consolidate children knowledge and experience.

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

Children are happy and relaxed in the childminder's care. The plans for settling children help them to adjust quickly because they are carefully thought out. Children have a regular pattern for meals and sleeping which mean they are able to play and their time with the childminder because they are rested and full. The childminder and parents work together to make sure children's routines provide continuity of care, which increases children's sense of security. Arrangements with pre-school staff mean children adjust to group based care and learning equally well. In the childminder's home, children enjoy exploring their surroundings, looking in the storage boxes and studying the labels. The opportunities for children to make their own decisions are important in building self-confidence.

Children follow robust hygiene routines and this helps them to develop their understanding of how to maintain their good health. On returning home, recently one child said, 'When I get in I am going to wash my hands'. When asked why, she said, 'So my hands are clean

and I can have something to eat'. This demonstrates children are cementing their understanding and developing healthy habits. The childminder provides nutritious and well-balanced meals. One parent, who had not previously planned for her children to eat dinner with the childminder, asked if children can have dinner in the future because of the delicious smell of the cooking. This enthusiasm for home cooked meals means children are encouraged to eat a varied diet and are happy to try new foods. The childminder uses meal times to help teach children to become independent, by teaching them to peel their own fruit and pour their own drinks. Children have plenty of outdoor play in the fresh air. They use the garden or local parks for active, energetic play where they can develop their body control and coordination.

Children are well behaved because the childminder sets clear boundaries. She role models good manners and kindness. The childminder provides simple explanations appropriate to children's understanding so they quickly learn to behave well, share and take turns. Children gradually begin to take responsibility for small tasks, they hang up their coats and put away their shoes when they come in from a walk. This helps them to manage their possessions and to be responsible. This prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.

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

The childminder has a secure knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. She meets each of the legal requirements and is clear about her responsibility to meet children's individual needs. She has comprehensive policies that she shares with parents so they are well informed about her service. Adults in the home have had the necessary suitability checks and the childminder carefully checks the identity of visitors to her home. The childminder has secure knowledge of safeguarding practice, including the action to take in the event of any child protection concern. The childminder ensures children's safety by carrying out risk assessment and taking steps to minimise hazards. For example, she has a gate at the bottom of the stairs, so that young children can move freely and safely in the hallway. This means children are protected and their well-being is assured.

The childminder has attended several workshops to increase her knowledge. She found a recent session on 'Practical life skills for children' particularly useful. She gained further insight into what children can do for themselves and because she could take the children along was able to see this immediately. This has had a very positive impact on teaching because she has implemented ideas and activities that support children in gaining valuable independence skills. The childminder reflects on her practice and quickly acts to secure improvements for children. She is interested in a workshop about how children play with natural materials but as there is not one immediately available has researched online so she can develop resources quickly for use with the toddlers she looks after. This proactive approach to learning more means she is up to date with current practice and emerging trends in early years. The childminder asks for feedback from parents and uses this to

develop her practice. She uses children responses to activities and their ideas for future planning.

Relationships with parents are quickly established and the childminder ensures information is regularly exchanged. The effective use of email means communication is very effective and parents know about their child's day and their progress. Parents say 'The childminder provides very high quality care' and 'My child comes home with amazing things, pictures and food'. Parents also comment, 'This exceeds any provision we have previously experienced'. This clearly shows the high regard they have for the childminder and the service provided. Partnerships with other settings that children attend are good. They regularly exchange information, which means children are effectively monitored between the two settings and there is continuity for the children.

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	EY467044
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	932334
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	4
Number of children on roll	4
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
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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