

<b>Inspection date</b>	10/09/2014
Previous inspection date	29/09/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	1
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

### **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

#### **This provision is outstanding**

- Children's learning is purposefully promoted as the childminder has an extremely secure knowledge and understanding of how children learn through supported child-led play and free exploration. The childminder consistently adapts her teaching, to ensure that all children are included and activities are tailored to meet the needs of each child.
- Children are highly valued as unique individuals. Robust assessment and planning for children's individual learning and development mean that they thrive in the childminding environment. As a result, they are making excellent progress in their learning.
- Children are highly protected because there are robust safeguarding procedures in place. The childminder attends regular safeguarding training and successfully uses the knowledge gained, so that her practice continually improves.
- The childminder creates a highly stimulating, child-centred environment, both indoors and outdoors. Children also benefit greatly from the rich, varied and imaginative activities and stimulating outings.
- The childminder has excellent partnerships with parents. She successfully and sensitively works with parents to promote all aspects of children's care, learning and development within her setting and 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 with the childminder and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, information provided for parents, and a selection of policies and children's records.
- The inspector checked evidence of the childminder's qualifications and of the suitability of all those living on the premises.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the childminder.
- The inspector took account of parents' views expressed in references and 'thank you' cards. She also looked at and discussed the childminder's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

## Inspector

Maura Pigram

## Full report

### Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1996 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her partner and an adult child, in a town-house, in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The whole of the ground floor, which includes a cloakroom, is used for childminding. The first floor, which includes a lounge and playroom, is also used. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The childminder attends age-appropriate groups with children. She takes children to and collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently eight children on roll, of whom, four are in the early years age group. Children 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 has a relevant early years qualification and 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:

- extend further the already strong settling-in process, for example, by making family photographs easily accessible for younger children, to enable them to talk about the people that are familiar to them.

### Inspection judgements

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

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves and make excellent progress in their learning and development. The childminder has an exceptional understanding of how children learn and develop. Every child is highly valued and respected in this dynamic and very stimulating setting. The childminder takes time to get to know each child and their family. For example, she offers home visits, so that she can observe children's interests in an environment where they are most comfortable. The childminder assesses and identifies children's starting points and ongoing developmental stages exceptionally well. She carries out regular purposeful observations and children's learning journal records are of an exceptionally high standard. These contain children's individual work and show the progress they are making along with the identified next steps in their learning. In addition, the childminder also creates a separate tracking book, which shows children's progress in more concise detail. The childminder carefully monitors these to inform her flexible planning, and continuous provision plans mean that children make rapid progress in their learning. The childminder also makes excellent use of the progress check for children aged between two and three years to plan for the next steps in their learning. As a result, the childminder is able to quickly implement imaginative ideas to extend children's ongoing learning and development.

Children make very rapid progress because the childminder follows their natural curiosity to learn and explore. She ensures the environment is stimulating and extremely well resourced and provides purposeful challenges. Children are able to freely explore between the indoor play spaces and outdoors. The imaginative tepee and highly resourced playhouse offer children a vast amount of opportunity to extend their learning. For example, books related to topics that interest them are included in these areas along with dressing-up and writing materials. These resources effectively support play activities which promote children's communication and language skills. Story sacks containing popular books, along with related items from the story, successfully engage children. Children confidently select resources they would like to play with and which interest them. Consequently, children display increasing levels of engagement and concentration. The childminder's teaching highly motivates children. For example, she introduces treasure baskets and discovery play throughout their stay. As a result, children concentrate deeply on items that they are interested in. They dig in the sand and enjoy making sand pies. The childminder uses thoughtful open questions during children's play. This extends children's thoughts and ideas for further learning. They reflect on the day out they had at the seaside where they played with sand, watched boats and had enormous fun when playing in the water park. Photographs show younger and older children watching in wonder as butterflies, which have developed from caterpillars, are released into the wild. The childminder introduces mathematical language throughout activities, such as daily walks and involves children in cooking sessions. Children are enthusiastic learners because the childminder always links their interests with art and craft activities and with the purposeful outings. As a result, children have high levels of confidence and are self-assured and gain skills to be emotionally ready for their next stage in their learning, such as starting school.

The childminder recognises the importance of having a close working partnership with parents. She gathers comprehensive information from them when their children first start with her about their individual needs, routines and interests. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about the childminder's practice. They are involved in planning, such as sharing information about what their children are learning at home and the childminder successfully uses this in her planning. In addition, the settling-in process is carefully considered. For example, the childminder obtains family photographs of people important to children, which are used in their journals. The photographs are then looked at as and when necessary. However, children, who are new to the setting, are not able to see their family photographs easily to further support their otherwise extremely good settling-in process. Parents' comments are highly complimentary. They state that they 'love the learning journals', which provide them with a broad range of information about their children's progress and the next steps in their learning.

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

Children thrive in this stimulating childminder's home. She works hard to ensure that she offers excellent continuity of care for children. For example, she offers several meetings prior to children starting, so that they can become familiar with the new surroundings. The

childminder places a high emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional development. They are nurtured and completely involved in the setting. For example, she values their contributions and regularly includes older children's ideas into the day-to-day activities. Consequently, children develop strong bonds with the childminder. The flexible settling-in procedures further contribute to this as the childminder develops a trusting relationship with parents. She is aware of the need to continue to develop her strong settling-in process, so that younger children are able to talk about familiar members of their family. The childminder has developed excellent communication systems for parents. For example, a detailed daily diary is used along with texts and photographs, showing their children engaged in active play and the routines of the day.

The childminder is skilled in promoting positive behaviour and good habits. She ensures that any issue arising, such as 'fussy eating', is meticulously researched and when appropriate relevant training is completed. New information is shared with parents and together, they resolve any matters related to children's welfare. The childminder is highly successful in fostering children's good relationships and social skills. Relaxed and social snack and mealtimes provide toddlers and older children with opportunities to enjoy each others company. Children develop a strong sense of belonging because the childminder ensures resources are easily available and reflect their interests. In addition, areas have been created for different types of play and a low-level table is used for stimulating play and mealtimes. Children are also provided with quiet spaces for rest and sleep. For example, older children settle down on the sofa with a cosy blanket ready for an interactive story. Younger children snuggle up to the childminder, showing that they feel safe and secure. In addition, children can freely access the equally well-resourced and exciting garden. Recently, older children enjoyed a stimulating cooking activity. This included sourcing ideas using information from a national healthy eating institute. Children chose to make a vegetable curry. The childminder skilfully involved all children from start to finish. For example, they shopped for ingredients and specialist spices, helped to prepare the food and finally enjoyed eating the finished dish. As a result, children actively learnt about the importance of healthy eating, which contributes towards leading a healthy lifestyle.

Children show independence as they help themselves to the superb range of stimulating toys and equipment on offer. These are regularly rotated to meet children's interests and continuous monitoring ensures that they are very well maintained. For example, the childminder has set up a library area with a wide range of books that children and their parents can borrow. Visits to age-appropriate groups means that younger children develop confidence in larger groups. The childminder is highly effective in promoting children's well-being and in ensuring that they have the confidence, emotional and social skills in readiness for nursery or school. For example, related books are shared and school-aged children are encouraged to share their positive experiences. Excellent links with local schools ensure children are emotionally very well prepared for the move when the time comes.

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

The childminder is passionate about providing a high-quality provision for children and families. She has an excellent knowledge of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The childminder consistently monitors and evaluates in detail all aspects of her practice. As a result, she ensures high standards are maintained. Children are very effectively safeguarded. The childminder has an extremely good understanding of safeguarding procedures. This is because she attends relevant training and ensures any new information gained is incorporated into her robust policies and practice. She is very aware of the possible signs that children may be at risk and what to do to protect them. The childminder has an excellent awareness of children's individual needs, such as providing opportunities for them to take reasonable risks in their play. She completes thorough risk assessments for all areas used by children and for outings. This means that every consideration is given to ensure children are safe and secure.

The childminder has addressed the recommendations raised at the last inspection exceedingly well. She has reflected even more on the opportunities that she provides for children to learn about the diverse world around them. Resources that show positive images of diversity are now available throughout the children's day and contribute towards extending their knowledge and understanding of similarities and differences. The childminder is extremely well organised. She is always seeking to improve and develop her knowledge, so that new information can be used to benefit the children's welfare and learning. In addition, she places children at the heart of her provision and values their contributions. Parents' views are also highly valued. Any useful suggestions are immediately implemented and monitored for the impact this has on children's care and well-being.

Parents state that their children 'love coming' and that the childminder has a 'caring nature'. They also state that 'The childminder has excellent knowledge and builds a strong rapport with their children'. The childminder's comprehensive welcome pack and her notice board provide parents with a wealth of information about her provision. This includes details about how children learn through play. Furthermore, the childminder provides useful newsletters, containing additional information about her practice and what children have been involved with during the time spent in this dynamic setting. The childminder works closely with other professionals. For example, when children start school, she ensures information about their learning needs is shared with teachers. This contributes to ensuring the move from home to school runs smoothly. She has links with the local children's centre and is very aware of the range of services that this provides, which she can help parents to access.

### **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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123328
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	985350
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childminder
<b>Registration category</b>	Childminder
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	6
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	8
<b>Name of provider</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29/09/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	

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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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