

Inspection date

02/12/2014

Previous inspection date

12/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

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 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 requires improvement

- Children are active and inquisitive learners. They engage in a wide range of interesting learning experiences, which the childminder plans effectively to reflect their interests and promote their good progress. She uses good teaching strategies to support their learning.
- The childminder creates a nurturing environment where children settle, become increasingly confident and develop friendships with each other and the childminder.
- The childminder has a good understanding of her responsibility to protect children in her care. She demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow should she have a concern about a child in her care. This means she protects children and promotes their welfare.

It is not yet good because

- Children's health and well-being is not fully supported because the childminder does not obtain written permission from parents to administer medicine.
- Partnership working with parents is not fully effective in promoting shared home learning, in order to extend children's learning further.
- The childminder does not fully support the continuity of children's learning, because the sharing of information between the childminder and other settings that children attend is not well-embedded.

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 a range of indoor play activities, including children having their snack, and spoke to the childminder and children at appropriate times.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the childminder.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, evidence of the suitability of adults who live on the premises, a selection of policies, safety procedures and required documentation.
- The inspector took account of the spoken and written views of parents.
- The inspector reviewed the childminder's self-evaluation form.

Inspector
Lorraine Pike

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1993 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband and one adult child in a house in the village of Hertford Heath, near Hertford. The whole of the ground floor and the rear garden are used for childminding. The family has one dog as a pet. The childminder attends a range of toddler and activities groups and visits the shops and park on a regular basis. She takes children to and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. There are currently eight children on roll, three of whom are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. She operates all year round from 7.45am to 5.30pm, Tuesday to Friday, except for bank holidays and family holidays.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that written permission is obtained from parents prior to administering both prescription and non-prescription medicine, so that children's health and well-being is assured.

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

- enhance children's learning experiences further, by extending partnership working with parents, to include provision of more ideas for them to extend children's learning at home
- improve partnerships with other providers children attend so that information about children's achievements and next steps in learning is shared to support their continuity of learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder has a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in their learning and development because the childminder plans and provides a wide range of activities that stimulate and engage them at all times. This is because she has a detailed knowledge of children's development and understands how to support their next steps in learning. As a result, children are well prepared for their next stage in learning and eventual entry to school. She works closely with parents to obtain information about their child's individual

needs, interests and stage of development when they first start attending. The childminder uses this information to plan activities and resources to aid their settling-in process and support their early progress in learning. The childminder completes detailed observations and conducts regular assessments of children's achievements, which she records in their learning journals. She uses this information well to identify appropriate next steps in learning and plan activities to successfully promote their future learning.

The childminder uses opportunities effectively, as they arise, to challenge and develop children's knowledge and skills. For example, she introduces children to the early stages of reading as they express a keen interest in the comprehensive range of age-appropriate books available. Children are engrossed in her story-telling as she uses intonation in her voice to capture their attention. The effective introduction of props linked to their favourite stories stimulates their imagination. As a result, children join in with repeated refrains and begin to retell familiar stories independently. Children are active learners, because they persist at an activity and enjoy meeting their own challenges. For example, they develop strength in their hands and increasing control of mark-making tools, as they use paints and felt pens to draw their favourite animals. This helps children to develop early writing skills in preparation for school. The childminder uses open-ended questions to challenge their critical thinking as they consider their art work. As a result, children enhance their drawings by adding detailed features, such as a tail and eyes. Children demonstrate that they are very comfortable as they smile and laugh with delight as they take it in turns to make the sounds of their animals.

The childminder provides children with a good range of experiences and stimulating activities outside her home. For example, they visit the local woodland and attend weekly activity groups. These help enhance children's understanding of the world and develop their physical and personal, social and emotional skills. Consequently, they become physically active, learn to play with others, and are experiencing new environments and people. Educational posters and interactive displays, all displayed at child height in the indoor environment, provide a stimulating backdrop for learning. The childminder has built trusting relationships with parents. She makes time to discuss children's day with their parents and also comments in their daily diaries. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and next steps in learning as the childminder shares their learning journals with them, following regular assessments. This includes a short written review following completion of the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. Therefore, parents are aware of some ideas of how to support their children's learning at home. However, the childminder does not exploit opportunities to engage parents in extending children's learning further by expanding on ideas to support their progress at home.

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

Children are welcomed into this nurturing home. New children settle well and the childminder gives both the parents and children time to become familiar with their new surroundings. The childminder has an appropriate understanding about the importance of developing secure attachments and supporting children's smooth transitions from home. She talks to parents about children's routines to ensure she understands how to meet

them. Individual methods to support children to settle are devised and agreed with parents, such as a cuddle countdown. Consequently, children are aware of when it is time for their parents to leave. However, the childminder does not fully support the health and well-being of children whose parents occasionally require her to administer medication to their children. This is because she does not obtain prior written permission from parents to clarify the medical reason for the particular medication and the dosage. This is a breach of legal requirements. However, the risk to children's health is minimal as the childminder obtains verbal directions from parents, and makes a basic record when she administers the medication. She also ensures that parents sign this when they collect their children.

Children show, through their play and interactions with the childminder, that they feel secure. Children snuggle into the childminder as she reads them their favourite stories and they confidently move around her home. The childminder provides praise for children's efforts and achievements. This helps them to feel special and valued and promotes their personal, social and emotional development. The childminder provides an appropriate range of toys and activities, suitable for different age ranges, within easy reach. Children are able to access these independently. Children behave well because the childminder is an effective role model. She provides guidance to the children about expected behaviour. For example, she encourages them to share toys and explains the importance of being kind to each other. Children are beginning to gain an awareness of their own and other people's feelings as the childminder encourages them to place a visual symbol against a photograph of themselves to represent how they are feeling. Being aware of the boundaries and expectations adds to the children's sense of well-being.

The childminder provides children with daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise in her garden or at the local park. This enables them to build up their larger muscles as they run freely and use equipment, such as, a slide and balancing apparatus. Children gain a reasonable understanding of a healthy diet. They visit the supermarket with the childminder to buy ingredients for cooking activities, and play games that help them decide which foods are healthy and unhealthy. Children follow good hygiene practices; for example, they wash their hands after using the bathroom, playing outside and before eating. The childminder has introduced a tick chart to enable children to record when they have washed their hands. This increases their self-esteem as they proudly count how many ticks they have achieved. The childminder supports children to develop self-care and independence. For example, she encourages them to manage their clothing and they help prepare their own activities. These skills contribute to children's readiness for the next stage in their learning, such as starting nursery or school. Children demonstrate they are developing skills to keep themselves safe and take responsibility for their environment as they help to tidy toys away when they have finished playing. Older children learn to assess risks for themselves as they walk to and from school with the childminder. She enables them to walk ahead a little and children know that they must hold hands to cross the road and wait at designated places.

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

The childminder has an appropriate understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the welfare and safeguarding requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, she has not met a legal requirement for both the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register with regard to medication. The childminder demonstrates a secure understanding of the local safeguarding procedures and takes positive steps to safeguard children's welfare. She has attended specific training to enable her to feel confident in her role. This has had a positive impact on practice because she knows how to record and make a referral to the relevant agencies if required. A range of written policies and procedures are in place to support her practice. She shares and agrees these with parents, which means that they are well informed about the childminder's responsibilities. However, the childminder does not implement all aspects of her medication policy, as she does not obtain written permission from parents prior to administering medication to children. The childminder promotes children's safety and risk assesses her home and any outings. She takes effective steps to keep them safe. For example, she ensures children are within her sight or hearing at all times. They also wear wristbands with emergency contact numbers for their parents when she takes them on outings. The childminder is vigilant in ensuring hazards are quickly identified and addressed, enabling children to play safely and freely.

The childminder uses an effective system to track children's progress, which enables her to identify any potential gaps in their learning and monitor their progress. She plans specific activities that focus on closing any identified gaps in learning. The childminder attends regular training and keeps up to date with early years issues by reading professional publications and discussing practice with an established network of other childminders. As a result of her further training, the childminder now has a greater understanding of how to support children's early writing skills. The childminder continually reflects on her practice and evaluates it through her self-evaluation form. This means that she identifies her strengths and areas to develop to ensure that children continue to make good progress. Future plans for development include, introducing magnifying glasses to enable children to look closely at small creatures, to enhance their awareness of the natural world. The childminder has successfully addressed all the recommendations raised at her last inspection. For example, she has made improvements to developing children's awareness and understanding of different cultures and religions. Both parents' and children's views are valued and respected as part of the childminder's self-evaluation process.

Feedback from parents is positive. They are full of praise for the care the childminder provides. Parents feel well informed about their children's care and progress. They appreciate the childminder's friendly and approachable manner and comment on the wide range of interesting activities she provides. The childminder shares a welcome pack with them when their children first attend. She makes this readily available for parents to refer to at anytime. This contains valuable information that enables parents to understand how the childminder operates. The childminder is aware of the need to form positive working relationships other provisions that children attend. For example, she takes account of the topics and themes that children are learning in nursery, by planning activities that complement these. The childminder also exchanges information with nursery staff, in relation to children's welfare. However, this partnership is not as robust as it could be. This is because information relating to children's achievements and identified next steps in learning is not consistently shared, to further support continuity of learning within the

nursery. The childminder values partnership working with specialist professionals and recognises the positive impact this can have on children's welfare and learning, should the need arise.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- keep records of any medicine administered to any child who is cared for on the premises, including the date and circumstances and who administered it, together with a record of a parent/guardian/carer's consent (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- keep records of any medicine administered to any child who is cared for on the premises, including the date and circumstances and who administered it, together with a record of a parent/guardian/carer's consent (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)

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

Unique reference number	123907
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874777
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	8
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	12/01/2009
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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