

Inspection date	12/11/2014
Previous inspection date	23/10/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	1
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's and her assistant's good teaching skills support children to learn successfully, and as a result, children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Partnerships with parents are good and ensure children's individual needs are identified from the beginning. This means that they are well supported throughout their time at the setting.
- The childminder demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures. This ensures that children's welfare is effectively promoted.
- Children thrive in their health and physical development. This is because the childminder promotes regular outdoor physical activities and provides healthy food.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The childminder does not always ensure that adult-directed activities are suitable for the age and stages of development of the younger children.
- The childminder does not always ensure the good learning environment is tidy and inviting, to encourage the children to play effectively.

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 childminder and the assistants engaging in activities with the children and discussed with the childminder, the learning that was taking place.
- The inspector viewed the areas of the premises and garden used for childminding.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of household members and assistants, and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents as recorded in written documents.

Inspector

Jill Hardaker

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She lives with her husband, and three children, two of whom are adults, in a house in St Albans. The whole of the ground floor and the rear garden are used for childminding. The family has one dog, two cats and some fish as pets. The childminder attends local childminder groups and visits a local allotment on a regular basis. She takes children to and collects children from the local schools and pre-schools. There are currently 27 children on roll, 12 of whom, are in the early years age group. All children attend for a variety of sessions. The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification at level 7 and she employs two childminding assistants. She operates all year round from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays and family holidays.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for young children to freely explore a wider range of materials during adult-directed learning, to enhance their creative skills
- ensure the good learning environment is consistently tidy, for example, by encouraging children to tidy away toys they have finished playing with.

Inspection judgements

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

The childminder has a good knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Both the childminder and her assistants support children's learning and development well, through play-based learning opportunities both inside and outdoors. For example, as children play with a construction activity the childminder's assistant encourages them to have a go at fixing the pieces together. This provides them with opportunities to think critically and begin to solve problems. Furthermore, she encourages children's mathematical development through this activity, as they use positional language and count marbles as they fall down the tower. Therefore, children's mathematical development is good and they engage in activities which effectively challenge them. The childminder provides a good range of books which children can freely access. They enjoy sharing the books with adults and are encouraged to talk about the pictures. This promotes their literacy development and ensures that children are gaining the skills they require for future learning, such as at school.

Young children are given freedom to explore the resources and babies enjoy shaking

rattles and banging blocks together. However, not all adult-directed activities are appropriate for the younger children. For example, they are given printed sheets to colour in. This limits open-ended experiences for children to enhance their creativity and expressive skills. The childminder's use of effective questions enables the children to begin to engage in sustained conversations. For example, as they chat together at snack time the childminder gives the children her full attention and listens to them. This encourages the children to talk in a social situation, and they demonstrate how they are developing a good level of language and communication skills.

The childminder undertakes effective, observations of children's learning. This means she is able to closely monitor every child's ongoing development. This includes the mandatory progress check for children aged between two and three years. The childminder identifies the next steps in their learning and is aware of each child's stage of development. She shares her observations with parents and encourages them to continue their child's learning at home. This means that parents are consistently encouraged to share the learning from home to inform the childminder's understanding of what their child can do. Therefore, parents and childminder work together to promote a collaborative and consistent approach to the children's learning and development.

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

Children are happy and enjoy their time with the childminder and her assistants. Expectations of behaviour are high and consistent. As a result, children's behaviour is good. Children enjoy the security of routines, and the flexibility to choose where and with what they want to play. For example, young children sleep when they need to and the flexible approach to meal times ensures that all children's needs are being met. The childminder and her assistants warmly chat to them through caring routines, such as when changing nappies. This enables the young children to feel calm and secure. All important information on children's care is shared well between parents and the childminder. This aids the childminder in understanding each child's individual care needs. As a result, children demonstrate a strong attachment to the childminder and a positive sense of security in her home.

The childminder promotes children's healthy lifestyles well. Children are independent with their own personal care routines. The older children know they must wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. Consequently, children are learning how to keep themselves healthy by dealing with their own hygiene needs in a way that reduces the possibility of cross-contamination. However, the childminder and her assistants do not always encourage them to tidy away toys they are no longer using, nor do they always model effective tidying up. Consequently, at times the floor is cluttered and this has a negative impact upon children's learning. Children enjoy a good range of healthy options at snack and meal times. This is because the childminder provides a range of healthy, home-cooked meals or children bring a healthy lunch. This provides them with a well-balanced, nutritional diet that meets their individual needs, helping them to grow and thrive. They have access to drinking water throughout the day and this makes sure they are never thirsty.

Children benefit from fresh air and exercise as the childminder actively uses the outdoors to enhance their enjoyment of the natural environment. Children enjoy regular opportunities to take part in planned activities in the extensive garden and on walks round the local community. These opportunities enable them to develop their physical skills and to understand about taking risks while playing in safe environment. An excellent range of resources promote their all-round physical development, such as, a climbing frame, a swing, balls and bicycles. Additionally, the childminder is currently developing a more natural area in her garden to enable her to introduce the Forest School approach to children's learning.

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

The childminder and her assistants have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and are aware of procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. They all have a current paediatric first-aid qualification, so are able to give suitable treatment in a medical emergency. Risk assessments undertaken of the home, garden and any outings off site mean that children are generally protected from potential hazards. The childminder regularly carries out fire evacuation drills; consequently children are developing skills in knowing how to keep themselves safe. The childminder has clear policies which underpin her service, and she is fully aware of when she is required to notify Ofsted of any significant event which may have an impact on her childminding practice.

The childminder's observations and assessments of children clearly cover all seven areas of learning. She regularly reviews the impact of her teaching on children's ability to learn. This aids her in establishing activities and learning environments, which work best to support the children's interests, increasing abilities and skills. The childminder is proactive in continuing her professional development, and attends relevant training courses and conferences. As a result, she continues to inform and extend her existing skills. Furthermore, she effectively monitors her assistants' practice by ensuring they continue to develop their knowledge and understanding through training. For example, she has recently supported one of the assistants to begin to make observations on children's learning. The childminder is realistic when reflecting on her practice and accurately identifies strengths and areas for forthcoming improvement. She regularly seeks feedback from parents about the service she provides and treats their suggestions with respect. She uses any information from children and parents to help her enhance and adapt her service to meet the children's needs effectively.

The childminder encourages positive partnerships with parents and other early years providers. This two-way flow of information is organised well and keeps everyone regularly updated about the child's progress, development and changing needs. Parents are full of praise for the care and opportunities their children enjoy with the childminder. Parents speak positively about how the childminder and her assistants care for their children. They feel they are given excellent support as they work with them to develop the children's skills. The childminder is not currently caring for any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, she is aware of the importance of working

with parents and other professionals to make sure the needs of such children are met appropriately.

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. 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	123346
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	854155
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	27
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	23/10/2009
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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