

Inspection date	08/12/2014
Previous inspection date	30/10/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- The childminder is an exceptionally good teacher as she has a superb understanding of how children learn and develop. She precisely manages the balance between supporting and extending play and allowing children to develop their own ideas to promote learning. Children enjoy a fantastic range of activities that fully engage and support them in making excellent progress.
- Children develop very caring relationships with the childminder and other children. Their individual care and learning needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met in this nurturing child-centred environment, which means that they thrive.
- The childminder has superb organisational skills. All her policies and procedures are written to a very high standard and she ensures that she is always up-to-date with current legislation and requirements. Consequently, children benefit from a provision that is constantly in-line with best practice.
- Partnerships with parents are exceptionally strong. The childminder fully values parents' role in their children's learning and development and ensures that they are regularly consulted and kept informed about their children's ongoing progress.
- Children's safety and well-being are of paramount importance. The childminder is highly attentive to children's needs and is constantly vigilant to ensure that any hazards are successfully minimised. Safeguarding procedures are fully understood and the childminder regularly updates her training in this crucial area of practice.

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 and regularly visit the premises, a selection of policies, safety procedures and children's records.
- The inspector took account of the written views of parents and those of the local children's centre manager.
- The inspector reviewed the childminder's self-evaluation form.

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

Full report

Information about the setting

The childminder was registered in 1992 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 Hertford. The whole of the ground floor and one first floor bedroom are used for childminding. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play. The family has a hamster as a pet. The childminder attends various toddler group and activities at the local children's centre. She visits the shops and park on a regular basis. She takes children to and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. The childminder provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. There are currently seven children on roll, four of whom are in the early years age group and attend for a variety of sessions. She operates all year round, from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder holds a relevant childcare qualification at level 3. She is a member of the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years and holds a local authority quality standards award.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- consider sharing with parents the excellent procedures in place to protect children when using electronic devices, to enhance their understanding of how to protect children at home.

Inspection judgements

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

Children thrive and are well motivated to learn in this extremely high quality setting. This is because the childminder has an exceptional knowledge of children's development and fully understands how to support their next steps in learning. She works very closely with parents to establish detailed information of children's individual starting points, interests and preferences. This helps her to plan a stimulating and exciting range of enjoyable experiences to support their early progress in learning. Consequently, children are inspired to learn because they are engaged in worthwhile and purposeful play at all times. The childminder places a very strong focus on planning specific activities that enable children to flourish within a short space of time. The childminder's excellent knowledge of the children is gained through pertinent observations of their achievements and accurate assessments of their development. She meticulously records these in their attractively presented learning journals. Her skilled teaching ensures children's next steps in their learning are proactively identified and met. Consequently, children make rapid progress and are exceptionally prepared for their next stage in learning and eventual entry to school.

The childminder provides excellent opportunities for children to build on their strengths and learn new skills. This is because she follows their lead, interests and ideas, successfully linking and extending activities, thereby prompting all areas of learning most successfully. For example, children excitedly explore a vibrant basket, full of Christmas wrapping resources. The childminder makes subtle suggestions about how to use the contents and provides children with ample time to express their curiosity as they investigate. This enables children to be in control of their own learning and have their own ideas. Children have immense fun selecting bows and different lengths of ribbon to wrap in the festive paper. They welcome the childminder's sensitive interaction in their play. She is astute at recognising optimal opportunities to ask thought provoking questions that require their response. For example, she encourages them to compare the different lengths of ribbon and think about why some appear to be shorter because they are curled. She also encourages them to recall their birthdays and recent visits to see Father Christmas. Her excellent attention to their responses inspires them to use complex sentences. Babies giggle and smile as she uses her lively voice to capture their attention. As a result, they tune in well and begin to learn the pattern of conversation, through turn-taking and responses. Children learn to solve problems themselves. They feel safe to take a risk because the childminder fully respects their efforts and ideas. For example, they work out, through trial and error, that they need to fold the end of their wrapping paper over to stop the ribbons and bows falling out.

Children demonstrate an exceptional keenness to write as they trace over the printed letters on a gift bag with their finger. They learn to link letters to sounds as the childminder says the sound of each letter. The childminder has high expectations that children get the very best out of every potential learning opportunity. For example, she encourages children to share their favourite books with each other, regardless of any age difference. This enables them to form secure positive friendships with each other. The childminder is superb at promoting children's awareness and understanding of the natural world. For example, children collect items they find on outings, enabling them to explore and investigate what they find. They use the mobile computer to complete age-appropriate programmes, which extends their concentration and challenges their co-ordination. The childminder provides children with limitless experiences and stimulating activities outside her home. For example, they visit garden centres and a range of organised activity groups throughout the week, which are significant to children's needs and interests. Consequently, they become physically active, learn to play with others and experience new environments and people. Partnerships with parents are exceptionally strong. The childminder spends a significant amount of time discussing children's day with their parents and consistently shares information about children's learning, following regular assessments. This includes, a short written review of their children's progress following completion of the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. Parents share their knowledge and contribute to their children's ongoing learning. The childminder is innovative in extending children's learning because she positively encourages parents to be actively involved. For instance, she shares her resources with them so that they are able to extend children's learning in their own homes. Parents also record other activities their children have completed at home, which the childminder uses to enhance their learning when they are in her care.

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

Children are very happy and exceptionally settled in the childminder's nurturing care. They form extremely secure emotional attachments with her. Older children comment that the 'best thing' about the childminder 'is herself' and that they are 'excited when she opens the door' to them. The childminder ensures inclusion is at the heart of everything she does. She goes to great lengths to establish very positive relationships with parents because she recognises the significance and benefits this has for children's care and development. The childminder ensures that she presents a warm, yet professional, approach. She engages with parents regularly so that relevant information is shared to superbly meet children's individual needs. This culminates in children successfully managing the move from home in to the childminder's care. It also supports children to feel emotionally ready for their eventual move on to school. The childminder is an excellent role model. Positive use of consistent strategies and age-appropriate explanations provide children with a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour. As a result, plenty of smiles, laughter and cuddles are exchanged, creating a vibrant and happy atmosphere for all.

The childminder enhances children's self-esteem because she gives frequent praise and encouragement. Children demonstrate that they are confident as they independently explore their environment and proudly sing the new songs they have learnt to visitors. The childminder provides consistent routines and an excellent range of activities so that children learn about their body and being healthy. For example, the childminder and children talk about germs and consider why it is important to sleep, exercise and eat healthy food. She places a strong emphasis on supporting babies to develop a wider range of tastes, working closely with parents to slowly introduce them to new foods. This also enhances parents' awareness of providing a healthy diet for their children. The childminder pays meticulous attention to supporting children who have food allergies. For instance, she has devised a comprehensive file to identify the ingredients of foods that link to common allergies.

The childminder promotes children's physical skills and exploration exceptionally well. They enjoy and benefit from daily opportunities for fresh air in the garden, go for walks in the community and visit local parks, woods and activity groups. Babies are provided with walker toys, which enable them to securely pull themselves up to a standing position. As a result, they develop good control and coordination in preparation for taking their first steps independently. The childminder proactively supports children to learn about self-care and safety, actively supporting them to learn to take calculated risks in a safe environment. For example, she encourages them to go ahead a little when walking in the community and they know that they must wait at designated places. To further promote children's awareness of safety she organises first-hand experiences. For example, children visit the local children's centre to learn about the role of the visiting fire and rescue service. They have excellent opportunities to choose from a rich range of attractively presented good-quality toys and activities, all within easy reach. Consequently, children are able to make independent choices. Children's independence is outstanding because the childminder takes time to help children learn to manage their own clothing and carry

out varied responsibilities. These skills contribute to children's readiness for the next stage in their learning, such as starting school or nursery.

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

The childminder has an excellent understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She has a very strong knowledge of safeguarding procedures and is very confident with the measures to take should she have any concerns about children within her care. The childminder's knowledge is enhanced because she keeps up-to-date with latest practice and procedures, through an established network of professionals. Very efficient safety procedures and the childminder's vigilance enhance her proactive commitment to promote children's safety. The childminder conducts comprehensive risk assessments to make sure potential hazards are identified and minimised. She has established a portfolio of policies and procedures to expertly support the safe and efficient management of her service. She shares these with parents so that they have an insight into her role and responsibilities. The childminder has an excellent understanding of how to protect children when they use electronic devices to enhance their learning. She is considering innovative ways to share this practice with parents to enhance their understanding of how to protect children at home. All other required documentation is in place and exceptionally well maintained.

The childminder has an exemplary understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements. She very efficiently implements and monitors the educational programmes to ensure children make very rapid progress. She meticulously tracks the activities and children's progress to ensure they are developing from their unique starting points. Therefore, children's needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met at all times. The dynamic childminder is dedicated to continuing to improve her already excellent service. She achieves this by attending relevant training opportunities that enable her to continue to enhance her knowledge and skills. The childminder is held in high regard by other childcare professionals, sharing her excellent practice through mentoring less experienced childminders. She is also an active member of the local childminding network group.

The childminder uses self-evaluation expertly. She identifies areas of her practice that require improvement and considers ways to address any weaknesses to promote continuous development. For example, future plans include, introducing even more play resources to further enhance children's understanding of other cultures and lifestyles. The recommendations from her last inspection have been successfully addressed. For example, there is now an excellent system in place to precisely link accurate observations and assessments to all areas of learning. Children and parents assist in the continuous improvement of the setting. This means that parents and children have a real sense of ownership and involvement in the ongoing success of the setting. The childminder establishes excellent partnerships with parents, who are exceedingly pleased with the service the childminder provides. They feel that they are fully informed of their children's excellent progress and welcome the childminder's expert advice. Partnerships with others involved in the care and learning of the children are extremely effective. As a result,

children benefit from a high level of continuity in their learning and development. 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 **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

Unique reference number	123967
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874780
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	7
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	30/10/2009
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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