

Inspection date	16/12/2014
Previous inspection date	19/03/2009

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

- Teaching is good and children are making good progress because the childminder and her assistant have a secure understanding of how children learn and develop.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are strong. Consequently, children benefit from continuity in their learning and development.
- The childminder and her assistant have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the welfare of a child in their care. This results in children being protected from potential harm.

It is not yet good because

- The childminder's normally good arrangements for managing children's well-being are compromised occasionally when children are cared for by an assistant who does not have an up-to-date paediatric first aid certificate.
- The childminder does not always help children to fully develop their independence during daily routines, in order to further develop their practical skills in preparation for their eventual move on to school.
- The childminder does not maximise the information she records in her planning system to ensure that her assistant is consistently well informed about how planned activities and resources are to be used to further support children's next steps in learning.

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, her assistant 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 her assistant and adults who live on the premises and a selection of policies, safety procedures and children's records.
- The inspector took account of the 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 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The childminder lives with her husband, adult child and two younger children in a house in Hertford. The whole of the ground floor and the enclosed rear garden are used for childminding. The family has a fish as a pet. The childminder works with an assistant. She attends a toddler group and takes children to and collects children from local schools and pre-schools. There are currently 15 children on roll, 11 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 meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that any assistant who, on occasions, is in sole charge of the children holds a current paediatric first-aid certificate.

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

- provide more opportunities for children to be independent, by consistently ensuring that children are provided with age-appropriate responsibilities, such as helping to set up and tidy away their activities and pouring their own drinks
- refine the planning systems by adding more detail about how resources will be used, so that all staff are able to support children's continuing progress and next steps in learning even further.

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 and her assistant plan and provide a wide range of activities that stimulate and engage them at all times. This is because they have a detailed knowledge of children's development and understand 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. The childminder works closely with parents to obtain detailed

information about their child's individual needs, interests and stage of development when they first start attending. She 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 attractively presented learning journals. These are precise and relevant and clearly identify children's next steps in learning. However, she does not use this information to the optimum as planned activities and resources do not clearly identify how her assistant is able to fully utilise resources and activities to maximise children's progress. For example, her assistant is not always aware of opportunities to extend individual children's imagination as they play with malleable dough.

The childminder and her assistant, through their enthusiasm and fun nature, instil in children a positive attitude towards learning. As a result, children are active learners because they demonstrate high levels of energy and satisfaction. For example, the assistant skilfully challenges them to match the shapes on the end of the toy eggs, by positioning them in the corresponding section of the egg box. Children begin to test their ideas, through trial and error, and smile with delight and give the assistant a 'high five' as she praises them for their achievements. Consequently, children's self-confidence is enhanced. The childminder and her assistant spend a significant amount of time engaging in purposeful dialogue with children. They use opportunities effectively, as they arise, to extend their vocabulary. For example, children begin to make links with the toy eggs they are playing with, and their first-hand experiences, to recall their parents using eggs at home. The assistant uses open-ended questions to help children sequence and clarify their thinking. As a result, they use complex sentences to describe how their parents use eggs to make cakes at home. Young children discover the meaning of new words in relation to actions as the childminder effectively provides a running commentary to her actions, using short sentences and clearly repeating key words. For example, she demonstrates how to use a rolling pin to roll out malleable dough, repeating the words 'backwards' and 'forwards'. Children express their curiosity as they use their senses to explore the texture of the dough. They squeeze it between their fingers and use cutters to cut out shapes. They develop the fine muscles in their hands as they operate a small toy drill to make holes in the dough, and cut around their shapes using one-handed tools. Educational posters and interactive displays within the indoor environment provide a stimulating backdrop for learning.

The childminder and her assistant have built strong relationships with parents. They make time to discuss the children's day with their parents and regularly share information about children's learning effectively, 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 welcome the ideas that they provide to extend and support their children's learning at home. They share their children's achievements and interests from home as the childminder encourages them to contribute to their children's learning journals using regular feedback forms. As a result, children benefit from a consistent approach to their learning and development.

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 and her assistant give both 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 what they would like their children to achieve in her care and their routines to ensure she understands how to meet them. However, the childminder does not always fully support children's well-being. This is because of a breach of requirement mentioned elsewhere within this report. Children show, through their play and interactions with the childminder and assistant, that they feel comfortable. For example, they turn to them for reassurance and help when needed. Older children ask what they are doing 'when they get home'. This demonstrates that they feel secure and regard the childminder's home as their own.

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 and also choose from toys that are stored out of sight by selecting from the childminder's photographs of these. Children behave well because the childminder and assistant are effective role models. They provide clear consistent guidance to the children about expected behaviour. For example, they encourage them to share toys and explain the importance of using their kind hands and feet. The childminder provides children with daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise in her garden. This enables them to build up their larger muscles as they bounce on the trampoline, climb the steps to the slide and push themselves along on trundle toys. Children gain a reasonable understanding of a healthy diet. They grow some fruit and vegetables in the childminder's garden. This helps children to understand where food comes from and what is good to eat.

Children follow good hygiene practices; for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and know to cover their mouths when they cough. The childminder and assistant provide some opportunities for children to develop self-care and independence. For example, they encourage them to put on their own coats and shoes before walking to pre-school or nursery. However, opportunities to further support children's independence during daily routines are not consistent. For instance, the childminder does not always encourage children to help set up and tidy away the activities they play with, or pour their own drinks. Consequently, children do not have ample opportunities to develop these practical skills in preparation for their eventual move on to nursery or school. The childminder and assistant provide children with clear explanations why some of their actions are not safe. As a result, they gain an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they know that they must not stand on their chairs in case they fall.

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 all legal requirements. This is with regard to leaving children in the sole care of her assistant for short periods of time, when she does not hold an up-to-date paediatric first-aid certificate. However, the risk to children's well-being is minimal as the assistant

has a suitable knowledge of first aid and would be able to administer it in an emergency. The childminder and assistant demonstrate a secure understanding of the local safeguarding procedures and they take positive steps to safeguard children's welfare. They have both attended specific training to enable them to feel confident in their role. This has had a positive impact on practice because they know 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 their practice. The childminder shares and agrees these with parents, which means that they are well informed about the childminder's responsibilities. The childminder uses thorough recruitment, vetting and induction procedures to ensure the suitability of her assistant. The childminder and assistant risk assess the childminder's home twice a day, in addition to assessing the outings they take children on. They are vigilant in ensuring hazards are quickly identified and addressed, enabling children to play in a safe and secure environment. In addition, they effectively deploy themselves around the childminder's home to ensure children are within their sight or hearing at all times.

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 keep up to date with early years issues by reading professional publications and discussing practice with other childminders. As a result of her further training, the childminder now has a greater understanding how to support babies' sensory exploration using natural materials. She also encourages her assistant to attend courses to further her knowledge and understanding of childcare initiatives. The childminder ensures that she shares good practice with her assistant and monitors her performance generally well. 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 further enhancing children's awareness of how to stay safe and healthy and to care for those around them. The childminder has successfully addressed all the recommendations raised at her last inspection. For example, her observations and assessments of children now accurately identify their next steps in learning. Both parents' and children's views are valued and respected as part of the childminder's self-evaluation process.

Feedback from parents is very positive. They are full of praise for the care the childminder and her assistant provide. Parents feel well informed about their children's care and the good progress they are making. They appreciate the childminder's and assistant's extremely professional and caring approach and comment on the friendly and relaxed environment they create. The childminder spends time with parents when their children first attend to share valuable information that enables parents to understand how the childminder operates. The childminder and assistant form positive working relationships with other provisions that children attend. For example, they take account of the topics and themes that children are learning in nursery or pre-school. They also exchange information with nursery and pre-school staff, in relation to children's next steps in learning and their welfare. This promotes a shared approach and continuity in the children's care, learning and development. The childminder and assistant value partnership working with specialist professionals and recognise 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

Met

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

- provide, or secure the provision of, any training which is necessary to ensure that all staff have suitable skills and experience to care for children (compulsory 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	123944
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	874779
Type of provision	Childminder
Registration category	Childminder
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	15
Name of provider	
Date of previous inspection	19/03/2009
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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