

Childminder report

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and settled in the care of this kind and friendly childminder. The childminder creates inviting play spaces, both indoors and out. Children explore a range of activities and resources available to them. For example, children use tweezers to collect and sort small items into dishes. This helps to develop hand-to-eye coordination skills. Children benefit from daily outdoor adventures. They enjoy regular visits to the local library, park and zoo. During forest school sessions, children explore nature and toast bread on fires. This helps to broaden their experiences and learn about the world in which they live.

Children behave well. They learn to take care of toys and respect the childminder's home as they help tidy up. The childminder encourages children to use manners, such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Books are used well in the setting. Children choose books independently and take them to the childminder to read. The childminder extends children's interest in their favourite books as she recalls stories as they play. She uses 'small world' characters and vehicles to re-enact the events of the stories. This helps children to develop a deeper understanding of stories and promotes early reading skills.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The childminder uses effective settling-in processes for new children. She gathers relevant information about the children from parents and through gradual settling-in periods. This ensures children's individual emotional needs are supported well. Parents comment that this provides them with reassurance.
- The childminder knows the children in her care and their families well. She uses this knowledge to plan activities that support children's next steps in learning. As a result, children make good progress from their individual starting points. Children often lead their own learning with support and guidance from the childminder, who is always nearby. Children follow their own interests and desires within their play. This helps them to remain engaged for longer. The childminder tracks children's development closely and completes relevant developmental checks, which she shares with parents regularly.
- Since the childminder's last inspection, she has strengthened partnership working with other settings children attend. Together they share strategies to promote further continuity in children's care and learning. This collaborative working provides a holistic approach to children's development. As a result, all children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
- Overall, the childminder supports children's communication and language skills well. Children are regularly exposed to new vocabulary as they play, such as 'horse' and 'crocodile'. The childminder speaks to them clearly and repeats

words and sounds back to them to support accurate pronunciation. However, on occasion, the childminder does not give children enough time to think and respond to questions to promote their critical thinking and communication skills.

- Children are beginning to gain an understanding of healthy lifestyles. They develop their physical skills as they climb and negotiate challenging obstacles at play centres and parks. The childminder teaches children to wash their hands before mealtimes. However, she does not teach children about the importance of oral health and keeping their teeth clean.
- Mathematics is part of all activities. The childminder encourages children to count and recognise colours at every opportunity. For example, as children join magnetic vehicles together along a track, the childminder teaches them to count. She uses simple mathematical language and challenges children further, such as 'you have two, we need one more to make three'. This helps to extend and build on what children already know.
- The childminder is reflective of her knowledge and practice. She accesses relevant training to support the children in her care. The childminder is keen to develop her understanding of special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Parents are extremely positive about the care their children receive. They say the effective communication methods keep them well informed of their children's daily experiences. Parents say their children are enthusiastic to attend the setting. They talk about the exciting activities, such as learning about Chinese New Year and trying new foods.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The childminder has a good knowledge of child protection issues and understands her responsibilities to keep children safe. She is alert to issues such as extremism and female genital mutilation. She is able to recognise when a child may be at risk of harm and knows the local procedures to follow. She undertakes regular training to update her knowledge. The childminder maintains a safe home environment. She has attended first-aid training. The childminder understands how to manage and document accidents and injuries. The premises are secure and well maintained, which contributes to keeping children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- allow children more time to think and respond to questions, to extend their critical thinking and communication and language skills further
- strengthen children's understanding of the importance of oral health.

Setting details

Unique reference number	123398
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10265118
Type of provision	Childminder
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Childminder
Age range of children at time of inspection	1 to 7
Total number of places	6
Number of children on roll	11
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

The childminder registered in 1996 and lives in Harpenden. She operates all year round, from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays and family holidays.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Rachael Small

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the childminder received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The childminder and the inspector completed a learning walk together to discuss the childminder's intentions for children's learning.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, both indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- A joint evaluation of a teaching activity was carried out by the inspector and the childminder.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at a sample of relevant records and documentation. This included evidence of suitability and training.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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