

Inspection of Cox, Sarah Jane

2 Chapel Close, Little Gaddesden, BERKHAMSTED, Hertfordshire HP4 1QG

Inspection date: 27 June 2025

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 enthusiastic to arrive and become deeply absorbed in exploring the wealth of learning experiences in this exciting environment. The childminder has a detailed understanding of individual children, their interests, and early experiences. She uses this knowledge to inform her planning and has created an exceptional outdoor learning environment for children that can be accessed in all weathers. Children relish in developing strong physical skills exploring extensive climbing equipment. They practice more intricate movements and develop mathematical knowledge building structures with various construction materials and exploring water channelling equipment.

Children have a close relationship with the enthusiastic and nurturing childminder and her assistants. They interact with children in a positive way, engaging them in conversations around their interests, families and the activities they enjoy at home. This creates links between the setting and children's home lives that supports them to feel settled and secure in the childminder's care. As a result, children are friendly and confident in social situations. They chat to visitors and their friends and put into practice the kind and cooperative behaviour they develop during the regular group play sessions that they attend.

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

- Children are independent and relish taking on age-appropriate responsibilities in the setting. Older children confidently complete hygiene and toileting routines with minimal support from adults. Young children feed themselves and independently select resources and equipment to play with. The childminder encourages this sense of responsibility by creating fun games out of everyday tasks. For example, children race one another to tidy away games after play.
- The childminder encourages children to keep themselves and others safe. She regularly discusses potential risks in their play. Children respond well to this, highlighting certain activities that should be played with when babies are asleep. They are particularly mindful of how to play safely in their exciting outdoor environment. Children learn to use climbing equipment appropriately and are aware of their surroundings when using swings.
- Children are well prepared for their next stage of learning because the childminder provides them with the skills and tools that allow them to embrace these changes. Children are excited about new challenges because the childminder encourages children to embrace new experiences. If children are unsure about how to complete activities, the childminder supports them to 'have a go', developing their confidence and resilience.
- Close monitoring of children's progress allows the childminder and her assistants to have a precise understanding of children's individual learning needs. These

next steps are generally supported well during play. For example, older children develop fine motor and mathematical skills using tweezers to sort plastic bears into pots. Their younger friends stack and sort colourful wooden blocks, delighting at the noise they make when they knock them over. This same understanding of effective teaching is not always observed when promoting children's language skills. On occasion however, some children miss out on rich opportunities to develop new vocabulary and develop their communication skills further.

- The childminder encourages children to develop their early literacy skills by providing a wealth of books to explore. She ensures that these stories are age-appropriate and reflect children's current interests and the activities they may choose to explore during the day. For example, during a colour sorting activity, babies explore textures and bright colours in sensory books. Older children can use magnifying glasses to hunt for coloured objects in more complex, interactive books.
- Relationships with parents are strong and respectful. Parents comment on the close bonds children form with the childminder and her assistants and how this makes children feel at home in this nurturing and vibrant environment. They appreciate how the childminder strives to engage them in their children's learning by embracing new methods to communicate with families.
- The childminder monitors the practice and well-being of assistants. She ensures they complete all essential training and take on appropriate roles of responsibility in the setting. As a result, assistants comment on how they feel well-supported and valued. However, methods of ongoing coaching are not yet embedded in practice to allow assistants to explore ways to further improve their teaching skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- embrace opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills specifically around promoting children's communication and language development in the setting
- enhance current processes used to support the ongoing practice of assistants identifying ways for them to deliver consistently strong teaching.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY342917
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10398449
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	18
Number of children on roll	20
Name of registered person	Cox, Sarah Jane
Telephone number	01442 842 456
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2019

Information about this early years setting

The childminder registered in 2006 and lives in Little Gaddesden. She works with two assistants. The childminder operates all year round from 7.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays and family holidays. The childminder holds a relevant level 5 qualification. She provides the government funded places for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at a sample of relevant documents including policies and procedures.
- The inspector considered the views of parents by reviewing feedback letters.
- The inspector observed the interactions between the childminder, assistants and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector and childminder completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with the childminder about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of children.

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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