

<b>Inspection date</b>	12/10/2012
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	2
		Not Applicable
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**

- Positive partnerships with parents ensure children's individual needs are met and an inclusive and welcoming environment is provided to all.
- Staff support children well in their learning and development.
- Staff have a positive attitude to improvement and are aware of their key strengths and the areas they wish to develop further.
- Children's communication and language skills are promoted as staff talk to children and ask them open ended questions to make them think.
- A committed staff team effectively implement the setting's policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and their welfare is fully protected.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments provide interesting and stimulating activities that engage children and build on their interests.

#### **It is not yet outstanding because**

- Strategies to more effectively gather initial information from parents about their children, including their starting points, have not been fully embraced.

## 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
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as 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 for inspection 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
- 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 activities in both playrooms and in the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector held meetings with the registered provider who is also the manager and talked with all staff including children's key persons.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Jane Mount

## Full Report

### Information about the setting

Apple Tree Child Care was registered in 2011 and is situated in Flamstead, near St Albans, Hertfordshire. It operates from domestic premises and the ground floor of the property has been designed for childcare purposes. There are two designated playrooms with a separate sleep room and includes associated facilities, such as toilets, a nappy change

area and a kitchen. Children have access to an enclosed garden for outdoor play.

The setting is open Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6pm all year round, except for bank holidays and two weeks at Christmas. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 25 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting also offers care to children aged over five years. Apple Tree Child Care is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early years education to children aged three and four years and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five members of childcare staff including the owner who is also the manager. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two at level 2 with one of these working towards a level 3 qualification. The remaining member of staff is unqualified but working towards a level 2 childcare qualification. A cook is also employed.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

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

- develop systems to more effectively gather initial information from parents about their children, including their starting points to further support children's progress.

### **Inspection judgements**

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

Staff have a positive impact on children's learning and development which ensures they make good progress. They are effective in ensuring that all children are supported in their learning and a key person system is effectively used. Key persons establish warm and close relationships with children, creating security for babies and encouraging toddlers to explore their surroundings. Staff closely monitor children's learning through regularly observing and assessing their key children. Individual development books show children's achievements and progress over time. Staff identify the next steps in children's learning and this information is then used when planning future play experiences. Consequently, activities and play experiences are planned which identify the developmental needs of individual children to ensure they make good progress in their learning.

The indoor and outdoor environments contain resources which are appropriate, well maintained and accessible for all children. Space is planned so that it can be used flexibly and a varied range of activities are provided that take account of the prime and specific

areas of learning. There is a balance of child-initiated and adult-led play experiences which encourages children to be active learners. Children enjoy their surroundings and show a keen interest in what they do. They arrive happy and quickly settle and engage in activities. All children receive strong support from staff which enables them to develop good attitudes and skills to learn effectively. Staff skilfully give babies and young children the space and time to explore while older children are encouraged to concentrate and persevere in their learning. This helps to ensure children are confident and well prepared for their transitions, both within the setting and when moving on to school.

Children's communication and language skills are promoted well as staff support children in their play, asking questions and engaging them in conversation. Staff encourage babies to explore and imitate sounds, such as when playing with interactive musical toys. They appropriately talk with and question toddlers during story time and children keenly select their favourite books. Children enjoy talking about the pictures and listening to the stories read by the staff. The use of story sacks, further promotes children's early communication skills. Staff are skilled at extending children's language as they listen and talk, such as at snack and lunch time, when they provide opportunities for children to talk with other children and adults about what they see, hear and feel while eating. Children enjoy songs and rhymes and keenly participate in music sessions, such as when they all join in singing 'the wheels on the bus' at circle time. They are encouraged to use their imaginations, such as when they play in the home corner. They enjoy 'ironing' the role play clothes and 'making' pizza's' which they then pretend to eat.

Purposeful relationships between the staff and parents ensure children's care and learning needs are supported. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting, including a parent policy pack. Staff work closely with parents to ensure settling-in procedures meet the needs of individual children. Some systems are in place to ensure initial information is gathered from parents. However, these processes are not fully developed and do not include information about children's starting points, to fully promote children's learning.

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

Staff are friendly and approachable and work in close partnership with parents to ensure children's needs are met. A key person system, along with the effective deployment of staff who support children in their play, helps to ensure that children form close bonds and secure attachments. Children have a positive approach to new experiences and confidently seek staff out for reassurance if needed. They demonstrate a strong sense of security as they are self-assured in the setting. Children are confident to make choices in their play and low level units enable children of all ages to easily access resources. Children are learning to negotiate and cooperate, such as when they build a railway track or roadway together and talk about taking it in turns to fit the pieces together. Children's behaviour is managed in a positive manner with clear boundaries set by staff. Very young children hear gentle reminders from staff to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Older children are encouraged to take an active role in the setting and willingly take on responsibility, such as helping to tidy away resources and equipment.

Children have regular opportunities to learn about personal care routines and how to stay healthy. They are aware of the need to wash their hands before they eat and after visiting the toilet. Healthy eating is encouraged and children are provided with healthy food choices. They talk about the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and enjoy growing some produce in the nursery kitchen garden. Plenty of fresh air and exercise keep children fit. They learn that physical activity is good for them and can be fun as they participate in regular walks and visits to the park. In the garden they use a varied range of equipment to promote their physical development. Staff help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe as they explain and practise simple procedures, such as not running when indoors, in case they fall and hurt themselves.

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

Leadership and management of the setting is good because there is a clear vision for the setting. Management and staff are committed to implementing the learning and development and the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and they do it well. They work together as a team to provide a good quality service for children and parents. Effective recruitment and induction systems ensure staff are suitable and clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Annual appraisals and regular supervisions are being introduced and these are going to be used as a way of closely monitoring staff performance. Ongoing professional development is encouraged and all staff undertake regular training. They are committed to the continuous evaluation and improvement of their practice and effective systems are in place to closely monitor and assess the quality of the provision. For example, they use staff meetings to evaluate practice and are pro-active in seeking the views of others, such as feedback from parents. Parents state they feel involved and welcomed at the setting. The educational programme, including planning and assessment, is also closely monitored to ensure staff have an accurate understanding of all children skills, abilities and progress. The setting's strengths and weaknesses are effectively identified through the use of self-evaluation and this accurately reflects key strengths and the areas they wish to develop further to ensure continuous improvement.

The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and works with parents and others to support and meet the needs of individual children. Links have been forged with local schools thereby supporting children's transition to school and ensuring continuity and the full integration of care and learning. Effective systems for working with parents and other agencies ensure children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely monitored and given valuable support to enable them to participate and achieve. Systems to help children and families with English as an additional language are also effective. Arrangements for safeguarding children are secure and children's welfare is protected. Clear safeguarding arrangements in relation to child protection have been established. This includes having named designated persons responsible for ensuring the correct safeguarding procedures are followed if there was a concern. All staff undertake safeguarding training and therefore fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and well

organised. This includes the setting's policies and procedures which staff ensure are implemented consistently and shared appropriately.

### 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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. 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 inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY419995
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	885007
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childminder
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	20
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	31
<b>Name of provider</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	

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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 that are

usually their 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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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