

Maidenhall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 155772
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Inspector Martyn Richards

Setting address Maidenhall Infant School, Newark Road, Luton,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Maidenhall Pre-School registered in 2001 and is run by a committee. It operates from two adjoining classrooms in Maidenhall Primary School, close to the centre of Luton, Bedfordshire. The pre-school has access to an enclosed hard-surfaced outdoor play area, and to the school's field. Children attend from the local surrounding area.

A maximum of 32 aged between three and five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 64 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The pre-school opens each weekday from 8.50am to 11.50am and from 12.50pm to 3.50pm, in term times only. Children attend for five mornings or five afternoons a week. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. It receives funding for early education places.

The pre-school employs six staff. The leader and her deputy hold degrees in Early Years Education, and the leader also holds Early Years Professional Status. All other staff hold National Vocational Qualifications in childcare at level 3. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The high levels of care and outstanding provision for children's learning and development make this an exceptional pre-school. All children make excellent progress, particularly in their communication skills. Staff work very closely with parents, and this greatly benefits the children. It is a fully inclusive pre-school, where all children are valued as individuals and enjoy activities which are adjusted to meet their needs and emerging interests. Staff are well qualified, self-critical and committed to improving the pre-school even further. The pre-school has an outstanding capacity to continue improve in the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- updating self-evaluation methods to ensure the pre-school continues to make the best progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff give high priority to ensuring children's safety, and as a result children feel very secure, relaxed and are keen to learn. All staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are committed to keeping the children in their care safe. The suitability of all adults working with children is rigorously checked and the management follow clear guidelines when recruiting new members of staff. The classrooms and outside areas are safe from intrusion or from children slipping out unnoticed. Exceptionally detailed checks of the facilities are carried out annually, to make sure that there are no unexpected hazards facing the children. Trips to the park and to local places of interest are also thoroughly risk assessed, enhancing children's safety further. All staff have received recent training in child protection. They are very alert to possible indications of mistreatment, and they know what action they must take if they are concerned. A highly successful key person scheme means that each child is assigned an adult who oversees their welfare and development, and is in close contact with their parents. This ensures that all children feel extremely secure at the pre-school.

Parents are highly impressed with the service offered by the pre-school. They especially value the key person scheme, and have full confidence in the staff to keep their children safe. They remark on their children's growing confidence and improving skills and appreciate the pre-school's stay and play scheme. Parents and carers are encouraged to stay with their children and join in with their activities. Staff have put in place an exceptional programme of support activities, designed to help parents build on learning points with their children at home. Parents' views are sought regularly, and the pre-school is keen to act on their suggestions. For instance, staff have established formal parents' evenings and expanded the programme of trips outside in response to parents' opinions. Parents value greatly the themed collections of resources and books that are made available for them to use with their children, which enriches the pre-school's relationship with them further. The pre-school has developed good links with the school, and is developing initiatives with the local children's centre to offer a greater amount of support to children and their parents.

The pre-school is committed to promoting equality. The staff ensure to check the progress and welfare of each child, and adjust daily programmes to meet their individual needs and preferences. Staff also use an excellent range of toys to promote positive images of cultural variety, and this is reinforced by activities, such as visits to local places of worship. All the children currently attending speak English as an additional language, and the provision the pre-school makes for them is exceptional. Staff are well qualified and have received substantial training on language development. The pre-school has been involved with the 'Every Child a Talker' project, and this has led to a great improvement in children's spoken skills and confidence. This is an ambitious pre-school, and all staff have access to substantial training opportunities. All staff are sharply critical of the work the pre-school does and have established systems to evaluate the extent to which their provision improves children's outcomes. Staff are aware of the strengths and

weaknesses of the pre-school, but are looking at new ways of charting improvements over time.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children happily enter the pre-school at the start of sessions and quickly find their own name slips and self-register. Afterwards, they eagerly engage in an inspiring range of play activities which are set out for them. Some settle down with staff and those parents who have come to the stay and play session to make colourful collage pictures using pasta shapes and rice. The children know they must be careful when spreading glue and make sure they handle the materials correctly and safely. Children enjoy accessing the computer and show great skill when using a mouse to select colours from a palette or making complex line drawings. Their fine motor and early writing skills are developing very well. They happily copy their name recognisably and can identify some letter sounds in it.

Children's creativity is fostered extremely well in the role play area. They enjoy playing imagined scenarios with a member of staff in their 'dentist's surgery'. They examine their patient, which is a large stuffed crocodile, and use a miniature dental mirror to help see inside its mouth. The children use brushes and toothpaste ably, and freely discuss the right way to brush teeth. Children are keen to question, discuss and share personal anecdotes throughout sessions and have many excellent opportunities to develop their literacy and speaking skills. New words are introduced continuously to the children, which dramatically extend their language skills. Children also enjoy browsing through books, and have the freedom to look through favourite stories independently.

Lively and interesting activities capture children's interests and challenge their thinking. Staff observe and note children's reactions to activities and use this information to inform planning. Each day they review this information, and use it to adjust the next day's learning programme, so each child enjoys activities which are geared to his or her interest and ability. Children's creative skills are particularly strong. Vigorous outdoor play promotes excellent health, balance and body control. Children feel extremely safe because of the successful key worker system and because staff are always on hand to offer advice and explanations about sensible behaviour. Children learn about living and growing because they plant sunflowers and cress seeds, have observed butterflies hatching, and were visited by a new born baby and its mother. Children are keenly aware of the need to wash their hands and have an excellent understanding of health issues. They understand that poor hygiene can make them ill and have invented names for unwanted germs, such as 'Mr Zandz', for dirty hands. They hang his picture up wherever the group need to wash their hands. The children are extremely well-behaved, polite and helpful. They display high levels of confidence and independence, and are secure in their relationships. Their pleasant manner with each other is modelled on staff's example of patience and good humour. The skills and attitudes the children develop will help them greatly in their future education.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met