

Linx Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	303246
Inspection date	27/01/2011
Inspector	Diana Pidgeon

Setting address	Lilly Hall Road, Maltby, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S66 8BE
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Telephone number	01709 816401
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Email

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*.

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Description of the setting

The Linx Pre-School opened in 1982 and is provided by a board of trustees. It operates from a dedicated room within the youth and community centre in Maltby, in the borough of Rotherham. The pre-school has a separate entrance, toilet and outdoor play facilities and serves the local community. The pre-school opens from 8.50am to 11.20am and from 12.20pm to 2.50pm every weekday during school term times only. An additional lunch club is provided which allows children to stay all day if required. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 18 children over two years of age at any one time. There are currently 51 children from two to four years of age on roll. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are seven members of staff who work with the children. Six staff hold relevant early years qualifications and, of these, four are working towards foundation degree level. There are also two support staff available who work with the children when needed. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school and make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure teaching is well-matched to children's individual needs and interests. Staff use a variety of ways to communicate and engage with parents and carers, which ensures children benefit from continuity in their care and that parents can join in fun learning activities at home. Reflective practice is a clear feature of the pre-school and enables staff to demonstrate that this is a continually improving provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure observations of children's achievements are clearly linked to each area of learning
- review the environment and routines to maximise the opportunities for children to develop their independence
- ensure policies are updated to give parents accurate information, with reference to the contact details for the regulator.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's well-being is underpinned by a dedicated team of adults who know the children well and implement the policies and procedures of the pre-school effectively. They provide high levels of direct supervision and are vigilant as children arrive and depart, taking clear steps to ensure the adults collecting the children are authorised to do so. Risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed to take account of any changes. Relevant procedures are followed for the recruitment of any new staff and appropriate checks are made to ensure all adults coming in to contact with the children are suitable to do so. All staff have a clear awareness of the safeguarding procedures, including the designated person who understands the appropriate action to take to protect children if required. Children's welfare is further promoted through the maintenance of all necessary records and documentation, including parental permissions that agree care arrangements for their children. Most staff are trained to administer first aid and this ensures they are able to act in the children's best interests in a medical emergency.

Staff provide a child-centred environment with lots of well-planned activities and freely available toys and resources. Children make good use of the interesting outdoor area and benefit from being able to choose whether to play indoors or outdoors according to their own preferences. Staff provide a balance of free play and adult-led activities, which encourages children to follow their own ideas as well as being introduced to new concepts. Clear support is available to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring children are fully included in all aspects of the sessions. Staff work closely with parents and any other agencies involved to provide a continuous approach to promoting learning and development. Staff value parents as partners in their children's learning and engage with them in many ways. For example, at open evenings parents are able to play with activities themselves and learn about how these support their children's learning. Parents are fully involved in sharing information about children's learning and comment favourably on the learning bags they can borrow to use at home. Parents clearly feel well informed, and notices, newsletters and daily communication books support their views. However, information within policies displayed on the notice board in relation to details of the regulator is conflicting and may mislead parents. Staff are forming good relationships with other local providers and arrangements for children moving on support smooth transitions.

The staff team are highly motivated and work with the managers to constantly review and improve practice. All staff access training and take on individual responsibilities. The manager monitors the work of the pre-school and motivates staff through investing in their personal development and rewarding their achievements. Since the last inspection, the pre-school has achieved a quality assurance award and met the recommendations made at the last inspection, resulting in improved outcomes for children. Staff use self-evaluation and target setting thoughtfully and demonstrate a good capacity for ongoing improvement.

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

Children are really happy in the pre-school and enjoy the activities available to them. Amid the calm atmosphere, children are always busy and absorbed in their play. Two children listen attentively to 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea' on compact disc and follow the story by looking at the book. Other children enjoy having a story read to them by a member of staff in the quiet area and many children look at books for their own pleasure. They start to make marks and attempt to write purposefully to label their own artwork. Most children are eager to paint with brushes and to create designs using printing techniques including finger painting. Staff seize opportunities to extend individual children's learning through carefully formed questions which are pitched to challenge their thinking. This keeps children interested and involved. Staff help children learn the social skills needed to work as part of a group. Through group games they learn to share and take turns. At group times they listen to others and develop the confidence to speak themselves. Staff base their support around the analysis of what children can do and the identification of their individual interests and identified next steps. Although staff keep a clear record of children's achievements leading to next steps, observations are not clearly linked to the areas of learning and so the evidence to support their progress is not entirely clear.

Children have good opportunities to be active and enjoy the wealth of different activities outdoors. They play with large items, such as, replica house bricks for building, and ride wheeled toys, climb and slide. Children make good use of the natural environment, choosing to sweep leaves from the area and searching for insects in the grass. Daily routines enable children to choose whether to be inside or outside and this freedom of choice extends to when they eat their snacks. This enables children to have breakfast when they arrive and to have fruit whenever they choose. Children who stay for lunch club are provided with a hot meal which is eaten in a sociable way with their friends. Although children make choices in what they do, some practices, such as, carrying children's wet paintings for them and providing meals already served on plates, limit their independence. Children are beginning to understand the expectations for their behaviour and respond well to the sensitive guidance provided by the staff. They follow good hygiene procedures and understand the importance of washing their hands. They help to wipe tables and seek staff support when they need the toilet. Children's awareness of keeping themselves safe is raised through activities, such as, road safety games outdoors and taking part in fire drills. Visits to the pre-school from the fire service and local police help to embed important safety messages. The children are developing an understanding of their community through outings to local shops, the library and school. Such trips are recorded in books and enable children to reflect and recall past events. The pre-school welcomes families into the group to share their cultural celebrations with all of the children. Staff use resources and images to ensure children develop a positive attitude to others. Children are developing good attitudes towards learning and show developing skills in handling real objects, small tools and using modern technology. Overall, children develop the skills needed for their future success.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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