

Learning Ladder Pre School

Methodist Church Hall, Leagrave High Street, LUTON, LU4 9LQ

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

04/06/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Positive use of the key person system helps the staff get to know the children reasonably well and helps the children feel settled, safe and secure at the pre-school.
- Staff are positive role models. They use consistently applied strategies that provide children with sensitive guidance about what is acceptable behaviour and the consequences of their actions.
- Staff have an effective safeguarding knowledge. They ensure that hazards are minimised and that children's safety and welfare is prioritised.

It is not yet good because

- Some children's development needs are not fully met as not all staff consistently plan for their individual next steps in learning and therefore, their progress is not maximised.
- Large group time activities do not always fully consider the abilities of all children. This means that sometimes children are not fully engaged or able to contribute in a way that is of value to them.
- Children are not consistently learning about good hygiene practices as some staff do not consistently promote routine opportunities to minimise the spread of infection.
- The monitoring of practice is not fully developed meaning that the areas in need of most improvement are not consistently identified to bring about further improvements for the children.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main room and the outside area.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures and photographs of children joining in with different activities.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the owner/manager.
- The inspector spoke with the owner/manager, staff, parents and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Susan Ennis

Full Report

Information about the setting

Learning Ladder Pre School was registered in 2012 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated in the Methodist Church Hall in the Leagrave area of Luton, Bedfordshire and is privately owned. The pre-school serves the local community and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term-time. Sessions are from 9.30am until 12.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 21 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve the educational programmes by ensuring that all staff use observations and assessments of children's achievements to consistently plan for individual children's next steps in learning.

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

- strengthen the delivery of large group activities in order that they take into consideration the abilities of all children and support all children's engagement and participation in the activity
- promote the good health of children by ensuring that staff take the necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection. This refers to the washing of hands after blowing a child's nose and encouraging the children to learn about good hygiene practices, such as individually using their drink cup before disposing of it to prevent cross-infection
- improve the monitoring of the pre-school to ensure that weaknesses in practice are effectively identified and that action is taken to bring about improvements for the children.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have an appropriate understanding of how children learn and develop and they use these skills to mostly extend children's thinking and independence. For example, when children decide that they would like to do some sticking, staff ask them to think about the process. They discuss the items they need such as glue, pots to hold the glue and tools to spread it with. They then encourage the children to self-select the items from the drawers and to then use them to make their designs. Children join their previously cut shapes into a glued pile saying, 'This is for my mummy and daddy' and show their pleasure in what they have made.

Staff mostly plan a range of activities to help children make sound progress towards the early learning goals and their school readiness. For example, they provide play dough to encourage the children's use of tools and wooden construction shapes to develop their use of problem solving and matching. Children enjoy developing their literacy skills as they share a book with staff in the quiet area and their imagination skills as they explore the role play resources, such as the play food and tea set imitating their real life experiences. Staff also make sound use of routine activities to generally extend children's development and future learning. For example, snack time is used to develop children's number skills as they count how many of their friends are sitting at the table. Morning registration time also encourages children's respect for each other as they join in with the 'Hello' song. It also promotes their understanding of the world as they discuss the days of the week and special events taking place, such as the photographer being present to take their pre-school photographs. However, some group activities, such as story time, do not fully engage all the children in the activity and some children are unable to contribute in a way that is of value to them. For example, more confident children move to the front blocking the view of others and some children start small conversations between themselves instead of always listening to the member of staff.

On starting at the pre-school parents are asked to share information about their children's likes, dislikes and stage of development. Staff use this information, their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and their own observations of the children, to soundly identify the children's starting point. They then use assessments and trackers to identify children's development and progress. However, as children's next steps in development are not consistently identified, some learning experiences are not always effectively matched to children's individual needs and occasionally lack sufficient challenge. For example, more able children are not consistently asked to write their own name on their painting to enhance their writing skills. Therefore, the staff are not optimally using the assessments to fully support children to make the best progress in the prime and specific areas of learning. Partnerships with parents are friendly and welcoming. The pre-school operates an open-door policy and soundly encourages the parents to discuss their children's progress with staff. Use of daily interaction, the sharing of the children's trackers and a learning tree encourages the parents to share their children's achievements from home. This also gives staff an opportunity to discuss the achievement with the children, who receive praise and a sticker for their efforts to build their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Children form appropriate and secure bonds with the staff helping them to feel settled and safe. For example, children proudly show staff their 'pretty top' worn especially for the pre-school photographs. Positive use of the key person system helps the staff to generally get to know the children and their families, and ensures that relevant information is shared with parents. For example, changes in children's well-being due to allergies is sensitively discussed with staff and support offered to the parents where appropriate.

Children are effectively learning the expectations with regard to behaviour and staff, acting as positive role models, sensitively help them start to understand the consequences of their actions. For example, when children tip sand onto the floor, the potential hazards are explained to them and they are then encouraged to sweep up the mess. Staff support them by providing a dustpan and brush and praise them for their 'good sweeping.' Children are also encouraged to think and care about others. For example, the older children are chosen to be buddies to help the new children settle and find their way around the setting. Consistent routines help the children in their preparations for moving onto other settings, such as school. The pre-school has introduced a book sharing library and given each child a book bag to help the children become familiar with this system as it is also used in school. They also plan to provide examples of the school uniform for the children to become familiar with before their transition in the autumn.

Care practices at the pre-school are sometimes variable and do not always consistently promote the good health of the children. For example, not all staff wash their own hands after cleaning children's noses, meaning that children's health is not totally protected. Although children's independence is suitably encouraged as they choose when to have drink and kindly offer one for their friends, they are not consistently learning about good hygiene practices as there is not a system for disposing of the used cups to prevent cross-infection. Children are learning about where food comes from as they plant and nurture vegetables in the pre-school garden and discuss the importance of eating their fruit at snack time. They are actively developing their physical skills as they use the sit and ride resources while outside in the fresh air and copy each other performing an exercise routine on the mat inside. They are learning about their own safety as they sensitively supported by staff to sit on their chair correctly in case they fall and to use their 'walking feet' when inside to prevent accidents to themselves and others.

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

The manager and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding the children. They attend training to increase their knowledge of child protection and are all aware of the procedures to follow should concerns arise. Staff are vigilant about ensuring children's safety while at the pre-school. Mobile phones are securely stored and all visitors are recorded and supervised. Staff also carefully monitor the main entrance as the children arrive and depart and ensure that children are only released to the correct person. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure staff

suitability when they start working at the pre-school including an induction process, which tests their knowledge of the policies and procedures in place. Ongoing support is given through use of staff meetings, informal supervisions and annual appraisals. This ensures that staff are given help to improve their knowledge, understanding and practice.

The range of activities and opportunities provided mostly help children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. However, the monitoring of the planning and assessments of children's abilities is not currently consistent enough. Therefore staff do not have an accurate understanding of the skills children already have or of their future progress and therefore, their progress is not maximised. Staff generally work well with the parents to ensure that children's individual needs are met. The pre-school is building co-operative partnerships with other early years settings in the areas to ensure that children are supported in their transitions and that relevant information is shared. Effective partnerships are established with other professionals and agencies to secure appropriate interventions and support for the children or families if they need it.

The manager and staff work together to support each other and the pre-school. They hold regular staff meetings where issues can be discussed and continually interact with each other to mostly meet the children's needs. The team have started to evaluate their practice and have some plans for improvement. For example, they would like to increase the amount of space available for outside play to increase the children's understanding and exploration of the natural world. Parents are invited to share their views about the pre-school. This is through use of parent questionnaires and the pre-school wants to introduce a 'wish tree' where children will be able to share their ideas too. However, there is currently less consistent focus on the weaker areas of practice in the pre-school and this has an impact on some areas of children's welfare, learning and development.

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 action. 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

Unique reference number	EY456684
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	895938
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	21
Name of provider	Zarina Nahid Ghani
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	07960322612

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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.

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