

# Children's Centre at the Mall (Luton)

Unit 35, The Mall Arndale, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 2TW

<b>Inspection date</b>	17/02/2014
Previous inspection date	27/06/2011

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Teaching is good because all staff understand how to promote children's learning and development. Staff motivate children to learn through the purposeful and fun play activities indoors and outside.
- The manager, staff and committee understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure that children are safeguarded.
- Children's progress is carefully monitored to ensure there are no gaps in their learning. Any identified gaps are quickly addressed and advice sought as necessary.
- Parents and carers are welcomed and involved in their children's learning and development. This results in a welcoming, positive environment for families.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff occasionally overlook opportunities to fully challenge children's thinking by asking open-ended questions.
- Staff do not always successfully help children to fully understand the consequences of their action and therefore promote cooperation between them.

## **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.

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 examined a range of documentation, including evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, a sample of children's records, development plans and staff records.
- The inspector observed children's play and staff interaction and completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector toured the premises used by the children including the route to the outdoor area.
- The inspector talked to parents, staff and children, held discussions with the manager and a member of the committee.

## **Inspector**

Sheila Harrison

## Full report

### Information about the setting

The Children's Centre at The Mall (Luton) nursery and creche opened in 1986. It is managed by a parental committee and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from one main room within an indoor shopping complex in the centre of Luton, Bedfordshire. The setting is on the first floor and there are lifts to this area. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area on the roof of the car park. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children.

The nursery employs 28 members of child care staff. Of these, 24 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including three with Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year and sessions are from 8am to 5.30pm, with Saturday sessions from 9am to 4.30pm. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 150 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

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

- strengthen teaching and learning experiences by extending the use of open ended questions to help children think for themselves and solve problems independently
- enhance children's learning experiences by explaining the consequences of their actions to help them develop high levels of self-control.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff support children, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities, to make good progress in their learning and development considering their starting points. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and therefore, children are offered effective support and teaching. Staff carry out careful observations and assessments and these are discussed at the planning meetings to inform future activities. Staff encourage children to confidently express their own thoughts and these are added to the planning. Staff develop a role play area from children's interest in space. They include dressing up materials and a large cardboard rocket. This helps children develop their speech and language skills through conversations with their friends. Children greatly enjoy the role play area of the laundrette. They act out real life events,

such as, using pretend washing machines and irons. They develop their manipulative skills as they peg out the washing and see the labels, such as 'open' and 'closed' as writing for a purpose. This helps children be ready for the next stage of their learning and eventually for school. Staff effectively support children with English as an additional language to speak English. Staff use both English and their own home language to help children communicate and also to help assess children's overall language development.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Children are motivated and eager to learn; they join in activities with enthusiasm and enjoy their time in the setting. Children persist for a long period of time as they experiment with paint and glitter. They use a range of tools to support their play. Rolling the balls in the paint is a great favourite. Older children set a good example to the younger children as they concentrate to complete a difficult puzzle, showing their pleasure when they complete this to their satisfaction. However, on occasions, staff use closed questions relating to number recognition rather than using appropriate resources to encourage open-ended questioning to help children think for themselves and solve problems independently.

Strong links are in place between the pre-school and home. Staff have several ways of communicating effectively with the parents about their child's development and progress. The key person or manager often visits families at home to gain a deeper understanding of children's starting points in order to plan for future progress. There are frequent verbal discussions and parents are regularly invited into the setting to see their child's learning record. Staff competently complete the progress check for children at age two, and parents are asked for their comments during this process. Staff encourage parents to take home some chatterboxes and story sacks to effectively help children's learning at home.

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

Staff acting as key persons are skilled and sensitive and support children to form strong, secure, emotional attachments, which provide a solid foundation to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. The gentle, caring interaction between staff and children ensures that all children form positive and trusting relationships. This helps children to be emotionally ready to move onto their next setting. Staff are observant and keep a close eye on their key children even though they maybe supporting play and learning in another area of the room. Staff place a strong emphasis on working together with the parents, especially those with children with special education needs and/or disabilities, to ensure that they are well supported. For example, staff ensure that routines are considerate to the needs of the children. Staff are well deployed to provide a calm environment even when they may be caring for shopper's children that they do not know well. Staff sensitively and consistently help children learn about expectations of good behaviour. They use positive praise, which is appropriate to children's levels of understanding. When young children express their wish for a toy that their friend has, staff encourage them to share and take turns. However, on occasions, staff do not fully help the children to see the consequences of their actions, by explaining why they should not take toys without agreement. This means they are not always able to recognise and understand the rules for being together. The playroom is well resourced and set out with age-appropriate toys,

which promote free play for children of all ages. Low-level storage and designated play areas enable children to move freely and make decisions about their own play. The new, dedicated play areas give staff opportunities to meet with their key groups in quiet surroundings.

Staff help children to learn about healthy living. They have a dentist chair and giant sets of dentures and large toothbrushes to help children practise brushing their teeth. Staff send home a sheet for parents to complete when their children have cleaned their teeth, and when this is accomplished, children are rewarded with a new toothbrush and toothpaste. This encourages children to learn about good dental health through the enjoyable play activities. Children are encouraged to become independent as they wash their own hands, spread their own butter on muffins and pour their own drinks for snack time. Children are offered healthy snacks and parents provide a packed lunch. Staff discuss what constitutes a healthy diet as they sit with the children at lunch time. Staff protect children's health needs well as a list of all care plans, allergies and food preferences are easily accessible to staff. Children learn to be safe without being fearful as they use the large and challenging indoor play equipment. Staff remind children to use their 'walking feet' indoors to prevent accidents.

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

The inspection took place following a notification from the provider, which raised concerns about the suitability of staff. The inspection found that although a staff member did not disclose information to the setting, there are very strong procedures to make staff aware of their duties to disclose any issues that affect the smooth running of the setting. Management have strengthened their practice by reissuing the code of conduct and have restated to all staff their responsibilities to make disclosures as necessary. This helps to further promote children's safety. There are robust recruitment and checking systems to assess that staff, including temporary staff and members of the committee, are suitable for their role of working with children and remain suitable to do so. The provider has not breached any legal requirements. The management team monitor staff performance effectively through regular supervision meetings and appraisals. The management have strong risk assessments and have comprehensive measures to protect the children from unsuitable adults reaching the premises. Staff are well deployed to support children's safety. The setting has won an award recently for carrying out effective evacuation procedures. Effective systems for induction mean that staff are familiar with the nursery's safeguarding procedures and that they work well in practice. Staff understand the procedures to take if they have a concern about a child in their care. The committee have set up a secure whistle blowing procedure to ensure that staff can quickly share any concerns in a variety of ways. Members of the committee and staff have a good understanding of how to meet the welfare requirements. The manager consults the Local Safeguarding Children Board representative and Ofsted as required in the regulations. The setting puts helpful information on display and on the website to give parents details of the procedures in place that support their children's health, safety and well-being.

A strong management team strives to motivate staff and sets out a clear vision of their expectations. Actions and recommendations from previous inspections have been successfully addressed. The manager and staff regularly discuss improvements and following the recent parental questionnaires, staff have redecorated the premises. They have also changed the layout of the play space. For example, the library area is more inviting and more frequently used by the children. This encourages children's interest in books and reading. Management and staff are committed to self-evaluation and reflective practice. Staff are enthusiastic and eager to improve their knowledge and practice. They update their qualifications and attend further training. Following a course on outdoor learning, staff bring large play materials indoors to help children learn on a larger, more active scale indoors as well as outside.

The setting has effective systems for monitoring the children's learning and development. Tracking documents and the completion of the progress check at age two years ensures children's development is monitored well. This helps to ensure that children continue to make good progress in their learning. Staff build strong and effective relationships with other professionals. This ensures that appropriate interventions are secured for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that children and their families receive very good support. Staff contact local schools that children are likely to attend to support continuity in their care and learning. Parents have been consulted and can be actively involved in the running of the setting through the parents' committee. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection state how happy they are with the care offered to them and their children.

### **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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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>	105261
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	955383
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	65
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	150
<b>Name of provider</b>	Children's Centre at the Mall (Luton) Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27/06/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 458545

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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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