

Merry Poppets Nursery

RAF HENLOW, Henlow, SG16 6DN

Inspection date

23/10/2014

Previous inspection date

06/02/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

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

- Staff carry out regular observations of children's learning and development. They use this information to plan activities that actively engage the children. Consequently, children show good levels of involvement in activities.
- The key-person system is effective. Key persons know their children well and ensure that their social and emotional needs are well met. As a result, relationships between staff and children are good and children enjoy their time at nursery.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress. Consequently, staff and parents work together to promote children's good outcomes.
- The quality of interactions from staff is good as they consistently model language and give explanations. This language-rich environment promotes children's own language development.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. In particular, there are good recruitment processes in place that ensure the suitability of staff to work with young children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently plan activities that fully extend children's skills in creative and critical thinking.
- The existing good practice to develop independence and self-help skills does not always provide consistent opportunities for children to serve themselves at mealtimes.

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 observed activities in the indoor and outdoor areas.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff and parents, as appropriate during the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with one of the managers.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery managers.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning, progress tracking data and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the manager's evidence of self-evaluation.

Inspector

Anne Bell

Full report

Information about the setting

Merry Poppets Nursery was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a detached, purpose-built premise, within the grounds of RAF Henlow, Bedfordshire. The provision for older children operates from a separate building. The provision is owned and managed by private owners and serves the resident and local community. The provision is accessible to all children and there are enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The provision employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one at level 5. The provision is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 74 children on roll, of whom 62 are in the early years age range. The provision provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend the opportunities for children to think critically and creatively during adult-led and child-initiated activities
- provide more consistent opportunities for children to develop their independence by serving themselves at snack times and mealtimes.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan developmentally appropriate activities in each area of learning. This ensures that children make good progress, relative to their ages and stages of development. The quality of interactions by staff is good. They model language well and engage children in purposeful dialogue as part of the learning opportunities. For example, staff talk to babies and younger children as they explore sensory materials, such as flour and shaving foam, and ask them how it feels when they squeeze it through their fingers. Staff encourage older children to describe what they are doing as they model dough and build tracks for their trains. As a result, children make good progress in their language and communication development. However, although staff support almost all aspects of children's learning effectively, they are inconsistent in planning activities that fully maximise children's skills in creative and critical thinking. Children's interests and development are closely observed and recorded. This information is used to plan individual next steps for each child. This good tailoring of activities to the needs and interests of each child ensures that activities are relevant and meaningful to them and they are motivated to take part.

The nursery rooms are well laid out to provide activities and experiences across the areas of learning. Resources are age appropriate, stimulating and well maintained. Rooms are print-rich, with posters and labelling that encourage children's developing awareness of literacy. Displays are bright, attractive and informative to parents, explaining the learning that has taken place, as well as celebrating the achievements of the children. Each group of children also has access to their own outdoor area, which means that children can engage in outdoor play at a level that is safe and appropriate for their stage of development. Children display good levels of engagement in the activities that staff have planned. Babies and younger children delight in exploring tactile and sensory materials and join in with songs and nursery rhymes as they play with the parachute. This promotes children's curiosity and sense of exploration, as well as supporting their developing language skills. Staff provide older children with a good balance of adult-led activities, as well as allowing them the opportunity to make choices about their own play and activities. For example, staff plan whole-group activities to teach children about shape, numbers and letters, as well as the days of the week. This promotes children's understanding of basic mathematical concepts and introduces them to the beginnings of literacy. Staff teach children to listen carefully and follow instructions as they take part in music and movement activities and in cooking activities. Consequently, children develop good listening and attention skills. This is a good preparation for school and further learning.

Staff display daily planning and give feedback to parents at the end of each session. Staff prepare written summaries of children's progress and share this with parents on a regular basis. At these times, parents are also given the opportunity to request a consultation with staff to discuss their child's progress. This regular sharing of information means that staff and parents are aware of children's progress and can work together to support the children's ongoing development.

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

Children are happy to come to nursery and settle easily at the start of the session. Staff interact sensitively with younger children to give extra support, to help them to separate from parents and carers. Children evidently enjoy their time with their friends and with the staff. Staff are supportive and approachable and they know the children well. As a result, they provide a warm, friendly environment where children can thrive. Children's behaviour is good and is managed consistently by staff, who encourage children to consider the effects of their actions upon others. For example, children are reminded to use their 'walking feet' indoors and to share with their friends, as this will make their friends feel happy. These clear expectations mean that children feel secure and confident. When children start at the nursery, parents supply extensive information for the children's All about me booklet. This information is used by staff to plan effectively to meet the child's interests. Staff keep a daily record of children's care and routines, including what children have eaten and when they have rested or been changed and this is communicated to parents at the end of the session. As a result, parents are kept well informed about their

children's care needs and well-being.

Staff provide children with nutritious meals that are cooked on site. A menu for each meal is displayed, so that parents can see what is being offered. Healthy snacks, together with the choice of milk or water, are provided throughout the day. However, at these times, staff do not consistently give children opportunities to serve themselves, pour their own drinks and clear away their plates. Consequently, children's independence is not promoted to the optimum. Children have access to fresh air and exercise daily, as they play in their own areas of the large garden. Staff carry out daily risk assessments, both indoors and outdoors. Children participate with staff to check that the play areas are safe to use each day. This encourages children to think about keeping safe and managing their own risks. Children learn about good hygiene practices, as they wash their hands before cooking activities and meals and after using the toilet.

Staff support children well when it is time for them to move rooms within the nursery. Children visit their new rooms for short periods, to become accustomed to the new environment and the new staff. When children are ready to move on to school, teachers from the new school visit them in the nursery and engage in group activities with them. These arrangements promote children's well-being and sense of security as they make the move within the nursery and when they transfer to their next setting. Children demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. This, with their very good levels of confidence and emotional well-being, means that they are well prepared for school.

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

There are effective safeguarding procedures in place. Relevant policies are comprehensive and regularly reviewed. As well as mandatory safeguarding training as part of the induction process, senior staff members undergo additional, in-depth safeguarding training. As a result, staff are knowledgeable about the issues that would cause concern, regarding a child's welfare, and understand the referral process in the event of a concern. Consequently, children's safety and welfare are promoted. Both managers have undergone safer recruitment training and have put in place a robust recruitment process, which includes checks to ensure that new staff are suitable and qualified to work with children. Since the previous inspection, the managers have taken effective steps to ensure that staff consistently make visitors aware of the nursery policy, with regard to the use of cameras and mobile phones. A full range of policies is in place, with regard to children's health and safety, including risk assessments for indoor and outdoor areas. Staff follow effective measures to ensure that children with special diets or allergies are well-protected. There are good practices in place to keep children safe. Controlled entry to the main building and a signing-in system, help to ensure that children's security is maintained appropriately. Since the previous inspection, the managers have taken effective measures to ensure that the building that is used by the older children is secure at all times. This helps to ensure that there is no unauthorised entry to or exit from that area of the premises. Several staff have completed paediatric first-aid training. The managers deploy these trained staff across the nursery, which means that children are treated promptly in

the event of an accident.

There is good monitoring of teaching and learning. Key persons, room leaders and managers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in reviewing the progress that the children are making. This ensures that children's strengths and areas for development are monitored and action is taken to meet any identified needs. As a result, the good progress of the children is assured. A comprehensive induction programme for new staff includes training in safeguarding, food hygiene and paediatric first-aid. There is effective ongoing appraisal and supervision where staff are encouraged to identify their own training needs. This means that staff are enthusiastic and well motivated about their work.

The nursery has good partnerships in place with the local school and children's centre. Partnerships with parents are effective. Feedback from parents is regularly sought verbally and through questionnaires. Parents receive a collated response to their feedback and suggestions are acted upon by staff, if appropriate. Parents are appreciative of the service the nursery provides. Those spoken to on the day of inspection praised the quality of care and attention that they, and their children, receive from the friendly and supportive staff.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY468971
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	968987
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	106
Number of children on roll	74
Name of provider	Merry Poppets Nursery Limited
Date of previous inspection	06/02/2014
Telephone number	07792531198

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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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