

Downside Pre-School

Oakwood Avenue, DUNSTABLE, Bedfordshire, LU5 4AS



Inspection date

27 April 2016

Previous inspection date

14 May 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The manager is highly qualified and motivates the staff team to continually extend their understanding through training. The team reflects upon the benefit of their new knowledge and skills and how practice is enhanced by this.
- Close partnerships with other professionals help to support children and their families. Staff assess and identify what children's needs are, working alongside the other agencies involved. They draw up plans for support and share their knowledge to promote children's care and learning.
- Children develop good communication skills. Staff model language and extend children's ideas. Group times provide opportunities for children to listen to others and share their knowledge. Smaller-group activities boost the skills of less confident children.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and staff plan well for children's next steps in learning.
- The key-person system at the pre-school is effective. Home visits enable staff to form good relationships with families from the beginning. Home loan bags help to bring children's home and pre-school environments together.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Occasionally, children are not fully supported in recognising and considering how to keep themselves safe when they encounter risks during their enthusiastic play.
- While the committee is undergoing a period of reorganisation of its members, the current arrangements for supervising the manager's practice and evaluating the quality of the pre-school at leadership level are not highly effective.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- support children's understanding to gain deeper awareness of how to recognise risks and learn about keeping safe as they play
- enhance the rigour of the reviews of senior staff's practice and evaluate the quality of the pre-school at leadership level more precisely.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and chairperson of the committee. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a small selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall-Gowen

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. There are policies and procedures in place that staff and committee members understand and follow. These are updated to include any new legislation. Staff maintain their knowledge through attending regular safeguarding training. Staff supervise children well as they play. They carry out risk assessments and review the areas where children play to minimise any potential hazards. Staff find ways to include all parents in their children's learning. The computer programme they use for recording children's development is particularly effective in helping them to engage with parents. The manager reviews staff's practice and together at meetings, they discuss targets and plans for improvement.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff use observation and assessment to review and plan for children's development. Accurate identification of children's starting points in learning help staff to track their progress. Staff quickly identify if children's development does not meet usual expectations and they effectively focus support on these areas. Children include staff in their play. They play at being hairdressers and staff take on the role of customer. Staff are highly sensitive to supporting children who have had limited play and learning experiences. Their kind and gentle guidance helps children to blossom into confident individuals who enjoy their time at the pre-school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Key persons work hard to establish deeply trusting relationships with children and their families. Each key person knows their group of children extremely well. This is hugely beneficial to children's sense of belonging and their emotional well-being. Children learn about being healthy and leading active lives. Outdoor play is an important part of the daily routine for children and they clearly enjoy their opportunities to test out their good physical skills. Effective use of the early years funding enriches children's lives by extending in their learning. A visit to the zoo provided children and their families with opportunities to learn together and share new experiences.

Outcomes for children are good

All children, including children who have special educational needs or a disability and children who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Any gaps in their learning close quickly. Children use tools with increasing ability and are eager to test out what they know and can do. Older children develop all the necessary skills they need for moving on to school. They are able to recognise some of the sounds of words and begin to show curiosity and interest in mathematical problems. Children's behaviour is good and they are respectful and accepting of each other and the staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY363763
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	1042038
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	67
Name of provider	Downside Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2012
Telephone number	01582 660833

Downside Pre-School was registered in 2008 and is operated by a management committee. The pre-school employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and the manager holds early years professional status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12.15pm until 3.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language, children with special educational needs or a disability.

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