

Apricot Preschool and Out of School Club



Priory Park Infant School, Almond Road, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 1DZ

Inspection date	26 May 2016
Previous inspection date	26 May 2011

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

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- Robust checks of the learning environment, children's assessments and the quality of teaching are fully embedded in practice, to ensure the team offer a high-quality service with children at the heart of the pre-school.
- Parents are highly engaged in their children's learning at home, due to the strength of the key-person relationships and continued sharing of information and ideas. Parents are extremely well-informed about their child's learning. They state that children flourish at the pre-school and acknowledge the excellent progress they have made since starting.
- Teaching is of outstanding quality across the staff team and fully meets individual children's needs. Children are challenged greatly to deepen and extend their learning based on their current interests and rigorous assessment of their abilities.
- The highly effective links with the local school contribute to children being considerably well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Children's behaviour in the pre-school is impeccable. Staff are excellent role models, demonstrating polite, patient and friendly behaviour. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management which ensures children know what is expected of them.
- Children are curious, enthusiastic learners. They confidently explore the carefully planned and highly stimulating pre-school environment. Children are developing vital skills for the future through the excellent range of opportunities to be independent.
- Children have an excellent understanding about how to keep themselves safe. They help staff to complete daily health and safety checks in the pre-school. Staff discuss any potential dangers with them and how to resolve them.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already very good teaching of mathematics to help children achieve the very highest level of learning in this area.

Inspection activities

- The inspector had a tour of the pre-school with the manager, including the outdoor environment.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and a range of other documents, including policies and procedures, and the pre-school's self-evaluation form.
- The inspector carried out a joint evaluation of an activity with the manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of the staff's qualifications and the suitability of all adults working at the premises.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and their written feedback.

Inspector

Claire Stevenson

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The manager has a very firm knowledge of the early years foundation stage. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin the work of the staff. Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Thorough recruitment checks and staff's secure grasp of child protection procedures help to keep children safe. The manager is passionate and confident about the service the pre-school offers. Staff take part in regular training to enhance their knowledge and skills. This ensures teaching is consistently strong. Supervision procedures are robust and fully embedded in practice. The manager has a clear vision and drives improvements within the pre-school. Through focused self-evaluation, staff identified a challenge to raise children's mathematical achievements further, so that they are able to excel in this area.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Staff engage exceptionally well with children. They offer sensitive support and praise to help motivate children to achieve their goals. Staff engage in genuine dialogue with children and model language very well. They use key words, such as, lower, longer and quicker as the children set themselves the challenge to build a marble run. Staff revisit and reinforce information with children to consolidate their learning. They pose questions to prompt children's thinking and allow them time to respond. Children are engrossed as they weigh objects. They develop hand-to-eye coordination skills as they use play tweezers to move the beads from one bowl to another to try to balance the scales. Children demonstrate exceptional problem-solving skills as they find crates to stand on, enabling them to reach higher as they use water, rollers and brushes to paint outdoors.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Staff use their expert knowledge to provide a superb range of rich and imaginative experiences. Children can choose to play outdoors and have plentiful opportunities to be physically active. Staff sit with children at mealtimes to maximise learning. Staff and children discuss the fruits and which ones need to be washed by the children and why. Children talk about numbers and count out how many people are sitting at the table. Children pour drinks, choose and cut their fruit, and butter their own crackers. Staff teach children how to play cooperatively together and to share resources, using sand timers to aid their understanding about turn taking and help them to successfully manage any conflicts. Children attending the out-of-school club have a positive impact on the pre-school children's learning. For example, older children read to younger children, initiate conversations and form good relationships with one another.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

Staff have high expectations of all children. Identified gaps in children's learning are swiftly addressed through clear and targeted actions. Additional funding is used well and carefully planned to enhance children's learning. All children, including those with English as an additional language are making excellent progress and thrive in the pre-school environment. They form a positive attitude towards their learning in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY352820
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	863369
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	3 - 8
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519019
Date of previous inspection	26 May 2011
Telephone number	01480 473551

Apricot Preschool and Out of School Club was registered in 2007. The setting employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one staff member holds a level 2 qualification. The setting opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for bank holidays and between Christmas and New Years Day. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

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