

Apsley Lock Pre School

BLRA Community Room, Unit 4 Evens Wharf, Apsley, Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire, HP3 9WU



Inspection date	8 December 2016
Previous inspection date	7 March 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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

- Children attend for a gradual settling-in process which supports them in building close relationships with their key person. Staff are supportive and meet children's needs. This successfully encourages children in building their confidence.
- Staff work in close partnership with parents. They discuss assessments of children's learning and development on a regular basis. Staff provide ideas and information about what parents can do at home to further their children's learning.
- The well-qualified staff have good understanding and knowledge about how children learn and develop. They provide activities that capture children's interest and challenge them appropriately.
- Children's speech and language development are promoted effectively by the staff. They talk to children about what they are doing. Staff use descriptive words that they introduce during activities to further develop and strengthen the children's skills.
- The management team frequently evaluates their practice and the range of activities available for the children. The views of parents, staff and children are gathered. These are taken into account when targets for improvement are identified and set.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always share as much information as possible about children's learning and development with other settings that they attend, in order to further support continuity of learning.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the partnerships with other settings children attend, sharing more relevant information in order to promote continuity in children's learning and development and complement their experiences.

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 and the acting manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and acting manager. They looked at relevant documentation, such as the nursery's policies and procedures and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation, and discussed these with staff.
- The inspector spoke to some parents and children and took account of their views.

Inspector

Michelle Baldock

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding about the signs and symptoms of abuse. They know who to contact in their local authority and the procedures to follow to report any such concerns. The manager regularly reflects on information gathered in assessments of children's progress to identify any gaps in learning and provide support to enable their continuing development. Children's starting points are identified from information gathered from parents during children's settling-in sessions. Staff attend supervision meetings, take up opportunities for training and undergo professional development to strengthen their skills and understanding.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff skilfully use questioning as one way to encourage children to think and work out problems for themselves. For example, when approaching a road, staff ask children what they need to do to check that it is safe to cross. Children's mathematical skills are encouraged through the opportunities available for counting, such as when they line up for outdoor play. Together, they count the total number of children attending that day. Children develop their imaginative skills as they play a game with the small-world toys and doll's house. Staff talk to children to help them make links between their play and their home life, such as conversations about a new sibling. They skilfully incorporate children's next steps in learning into the weekly plan of activities. This effectively supports children to continue to be challenged and make good progress in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Children are supported to learn the differences between right and wrong. Staff provide clear explanations about behaviour which strengthens children's understanding of how to treat and respect one another. Children are provided with healthy snacks. They are encouraged to learn about living a healthy lifestyle. Staff have discussions with children about eating nutritious food and they read stories to learn more about what food is good for them. Children enjoy developing their physical skills as they take frequent trips to the local parks and walks around the nearby lock. Staff effectively use these opportunities to develop and extend children's understanding and knowledge of their local environment. Staff encourage children to talk about the differences identified in the changing seasons. For example, children comment on the leaves falling from the trees and how the barges have parked for the winter in the lock.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are eager learners and enjoy taking part in a wide range of learning opportunities. All children, including those who have special educational needs or disabilities and children who speak English as additional language, make good progress from their starting points. They learn the skills needed ready for moving on to school. Children enthusiastically join in with stories and eagerly respond when they are asked a question.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY302558
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1064705
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Apsley Lock Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP904066
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2013
Telephone number	07891 093 523

Apsley Lock Pre School was registered in 2005 and is operated by a management committee. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above, including two with qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm. On Monday to Thursday they open until 12.55pm for the lunch club. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

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