

Applecroft Pre-School

Applecroft Road, Luton LU2 8BB



Inspection date	25 March 2019
Previous inspection date	17 March 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of 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 inspiring manager leads dedicated and highly committed staff, who work very well together. They regularly reflect on their practice and identify areas for improvement. Staff undertake training to help enhance their good teaching skills and practice to higher levels.
- Staff promote children's communication and language skills well and are aware when children need extra support, such as when they speak English as an additional language. Staff use simple signing when they speak to groups of children and the use of a visual timetable helps children to become familiar with the daily routine.
- Children are excited on days when it is their turn to be a helper. They help to prepare snack and clear away utensils. Other children enthusiastically look for litter in the outside area and know how to safely dispose of it using grippers.
- Staff develop positive partnerships with parents and talk to them each day about their children's achievements. They invite parents to more in-depth discussions, such as at parents' evening. Parents speak positively about the staff and feel their children make good progress that prepares them well for moving on to school.
- Staff gather useful information from parents on what children can already do when they first start to attend the pre-school. However, they do not always use this information quickly enough to identify children's starting points in learning from the outset.
- Systems for monitoring and comparing the progress different groups of children make, including those in receipt of funded early education, are not fully developed.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- take greater account of parents' knowledge of what their children know and can do on entry, in order to more swiftly identify children's starting points in learning
- extend the monitoring of the progress made by groups of children so that staff have a clear picture of how well all groups of children are doing.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the staff's teaching and their interactions with children indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children, and held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector observed an adult-led activity with the manager and held a discussion with her about staff's teaching and children's learning.
- The inspector looked at a sample of paperwork, including staff qualifications, suitability checks and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents and took account of their views.

Inspector
Jill Hardaker

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Safeguarding is effective. All staff have a secure understanding of how to deal with concerns about children's welfare. They are able to identify the possible signs and symptoms which may indicate children are at risk of harm. This includes children being at risk of radicalisation and extremism. The dedicated staff have been in their roles for many years, which results in a very low turnover of staff. Despite this, the provider has robust procedures for recruiting new staff and for checking their suitability to work with children. A thorough induction procedure helps new staff and students to quickly understand their role and responsibilities. Staff report they are supported well by the manager, for example, when they undertake qualification courses and through constructive feedback on their practice at supervision meetings.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff complete regular observations and assessments of children's achievements. They use this information well to plan for children's ongoing learning. Staff share children's next steps in learning with parents and with other settings they attend. This helps to promote continuity in children's development. Staff provide many opportunities for children to make independent choices and initiate their own play. For example, children make up games in the role-play area based on their experiences, such as visiting cafes. Staff plan focused activities to teach children about the world. Children demonstrate their developing understanding of how plants grow. For example, as they plant bulbs and seeds, they talk about them needing to be in the soil and know they need water and sunlight to make them grow.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

The key-person system is consistent and strong. Staff warmly greet their key children when they arrive at the pre-school. They also hold conversations with parents to check on children's well-being. Staff set up a stimulating environment each day, making the best use of the space available to them. Children's behaviour is good; they play cooperatively, take turns and show respect for each other and for adults. Children show high levels of independence and develop good self-care skills. Staff encourage them to complete tasks for themselves, such as by self-registering when they arrive and putting on their coats. Children have many opportunities for active play outdoors. They enjoy having space to run, ride scooters and play ball games.

Outcomes for children are good

Children are confident and demonstrate positive attitudes to their play and learning. They are acquiring the key skills they need in readiness for school. Children develop good literacy skills and many can write their names. Boys, in particular, enjoy carrying clipboards around with them and talk about the words their marks represent. Children are able to recognise and match numbers. For example, they know that when they put the numerals '2' and '1' together they make '21'.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY477000
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10075910
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 - 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Applecroft Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP533622
Date of previous inspection	17 March 2016
Telephone number	07985765665

Applecroft Pre-School opened in 1971 and re-registered in 2014. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 3.15pm. The pre-school receives funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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