

Inspection of Wilstead Pre-School

Wilstead Lower School, Cotton End Road, Wilstead, Bedford MK45 3BX

Inspection date: 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are confident and motivated to learn at this welcoming pre-school. They build strong, trusting relationships with their key person. Children become independent at pre-school. Staff use opportunities to build on their personal care skills during the routine times of the day. Children put their coats on to go outside and set up their own lunch boxes ready to eat.

Children explore and experiment with interesting resources and materials to their satisfaction. In the construction shed, children pretend to mend the roof. They think about how to create a higher platform to stand on to reach the roof. Staff help children think about how to make it sturdy and safe. This helps to give children practical opportunities to solve problems.

Staff provide rich opportunities for children to develop their love of reading as they re-enact favourite stories. Children follow staff around the garden on a 'bear hunt', repeating familiar phrases and using words playfully. Staff expertly enable children to recall the sequence of the story, splashing in water then squelching in mud. Children delight with anticipation as they discover the bear hiding. This helps them to gain a broad understanding of language and speech patterns.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager is incredibly experienced and knowledgeable about working with children. She has an extensive knowledge of how to teach children new skills and how to support staff to enhance their teaching skills further. Staff feel well supported and are aware of the areas they need to develop so they can all become highly skilled teachers.
- There are some instances of outstanding teaching. Staff provide an extremely varied vocabulary to help extend children's language skills. For example, together with children, they explore how different items sound on different surfaces. Staff use words such as 'echo' and create an echo so that the children understand the meaning of the new word.
- Children learn about nature and how to care for living things. They dig with shovels and trowels in the digging area, carefully looking for worms and insects. Staff show them how to check that the plants have enough water. Staff enable children to get water from the tap so they can give the plants the right amount.
- Staff know children very well. They gather detailed information from parents when children start attending the pre-school. This helps staff to accurately assess children and become understanding of the children's needs. They also use this information to plan learning activities to complement the children's overall experiences.
- Staff have high expectations of children and help them to understand how to

behave. Staff effectively support any minor disagreements between children well because they understand their levels of development.

- Staff encourage children to concentrate as they sit for group times to read stories and sing songs. However, during very large group times, some children become fidgety and distracted and they do not all benefit fully from learning experiences.
- Staff effectively support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work with specialists to ensure they are providing the right environment for children. Staff work closely with parents to help ensure that children receive the support they need. The whole team work hard to ensure that all children who attend have a positive experience of early education. This helps children to be confident when they move on to the next stage of their learning, such when they go to school.
- Children are beginning to gain an understanding of what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They wash their hands at suitable times and have ample opportunities to exercise. Inside, they dance to music. They ride tricycles and balance on beams in the garden. This helps to develop their physical coordination.
- Parents are extremely happy with the pre-school. They say the staff 'go above and beyond' for not just their children but their whole family. They value all that the staff do and can see the progress their children are making, when they are at home. For example, children talk more and can do more things by themselves, such as putting on their own shoes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated officer has an excellent knowledge of how to support the welfare of children and families. Her extensive experience means that subtle and emerging concerns are swiftly addressed and carefully monitored. For example, the manager makes referrals to specific agencies who can give the best support for children and their families. Staff are confident in their safeguarding knowledge and know what to do if they have a concern about a child. They understand their responsibilities to help keep children safe and report any concerns about colleagues. Newly recruited staff undergo a thorough process to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to consider how they organise large-group times so that all children are equally engaged.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY374254
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10137434
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 at time of inspection	2 to 8
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Wilstead Pre-School Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP910806
Telephone number	01234 742546
Date of previous inspection	16 June 2015

Information about this early years setting

Wilstead Pre-School opened in 1968. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 4. The pre-school opens from 8am until 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, during term time only.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elke Rockey

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the pre-school.
- The manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want the children to learn.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The provider and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a spontaneous activity.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the pre-school.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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