

Inspection of Maidenhall Community Pre-School

Maidenhall Primary School, Newark Road, LUTON LU4 8LD

Inspection date: 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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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 arrive happily at the pre-school and quickly settle in to play. They explore the high-quality learning areas which entice children to be creative and develop their imaginations. Staff skilfully interweave themes through the activities, such as the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Children enjoy mixing together the ingredients required to make porridge and use shaped blocks to make houses. They show a deep understanding of the sequence of events in the story as they retell it with great detail.

Children behave well. They play cooperatively, take turns and share resources successfully. Children are highly independent and enjoy being given tasks to complete. They use checklists to make sure that all areas have been tidied up properly and take this role very seriously. Most of the children speak English as an additional language. Staff get to know them very well and use their interests from home to help children to feel safe and secure. Staff use clear words and picture prompts so that children understand what is going to happen next. Children thoroughly enjoy listening to stories told in their home languages. They become animated and join in with enthusiasm.

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

- Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, staff have noticed that many children are taking longer to feel secure in the pre-school. They have adjusted settling-in procedures and given extra support to children and their families. Some children had lower than expected starting points in learning, especially around speech and language and social development. Swift action taken by the experienced staff means that these gaps in children's learning are now closing.
- Staff work well in partnership with parents. They establish an effective two-way flow of information that helps to promote consistency in children's care and learning. Parents' comments about the pre-school and staff are highly positive. They state that they feel well informed about their children's development and know how to support their learning at home. Parents say that their children feel safe and that their needs are well met.
- Overall, staff are helping children to develop their communication and language skills. They introduce words such as 'strong' and 'sturdy' to describe towers that children make. Staff ask children questions to help to extend their learning. However, they are often too quick to answer their own questions or offer a solution to problems children encounter. This does not give children enough time to process the information and think of a response.
- Children have many opportunities to be outside. On cold days, staff show them how to keep warm by moving around. Children enjoy exploring natural resources, such as soil, sand and water. They talk about how sand changes

when water is added to it. Staff use these opportunities to extend play and learning. For example, they suggest the sand mixture is used as cement to build a tower, following a plan a child had drawn. This results in children becoming engrossed in high-quality learning.

- The managers and staff regularly evaluate their practice and look for ways to continually improve. They have regular meetings for discussion and to reflect on each child's needs. Managers seek the views of parents and children and take their ideas into account to further strengthen the pre-school.
- Managers are highly aware of health concerns in their local area, such as around oral health. They support children and families to understand the importance of teeth brushing and healthy diets. Staff use activities to talk to children about healthy food. However, at mealtimes, children are not always encouraged to eat the healthiest part of their lunch or offered water to drink instead of fruit juice.
- Staff turnover is very low. Despite this, the provider has rigorous recruitment procedures in place to help to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The provider has good systems in place to review staff's practice and to help them to develop further. Staff regularly undertake training and research, which further enhances their already good knowledge and skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff regularly complete safeguarding training and give high priority to ensuring that children are safe. They have a robust knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse, including extremist behaviour. This helps staff to quickly recognise when children may be at risk of harm. Additionally, staff know how to report these concerns to relevant safeguarding agencies. Managers continually reflect on their policies and procedures in line with their knowledge of the local area. Staff make contact with all parents to ensure that children are safe when they do not attend.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- allow children enough time to think and respond to questions during play and group activities
- continue to support children to understand how to make healthy food choices.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY450345
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10137457
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 4
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	71
Name of registered person	Maidenhall Community Pre-School Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP531795
Telephone number	01582619009
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2013

Information about this early years setting

Maidenhall Community Pre-School registered in 2012. It operates within Maidenhall Primary School, Luton, Bedfordshire. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 8.30am until 3.30pm. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jill Hardaker

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 managers and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the pre-school.
- One of the managers and the inspector had a learning walk across all areas of the pre-school to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation was carried out and discussed between the managers and the inspector.
- Staff, children and parents spoke with the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the pre-school's documentation during a meeting with the managers. This included reviewing information about safeguarding, staff suitability and training.

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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