

Inspection of Little Companions

172 - 172A Biscot Road, Luton LU3 1AX

Inspection date:

16 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children develop warm, trusting relationships with staff, who are kind and caring. They separate from carers well and are excited to explore the many activities available to them. Children develop excellent levels of confidence and self-esteem and a willingness to try new activities. For instance, young children immerse themselves in exploring jelly. They carefully feel it with their hands and rub it on their cheeks. Highly attentive staff use clear words and short sentences as they describe how the jelly feels and smells. Children clearly feel safe, happy and content, and they build secure attachments to their key persons. The behaviour of all children is excellent.

The highest priority is given to children's health and well-being. Children spend considerable amounts of the day outdoors. Staff know how important this is for those children who have little access to outside space at home. Children are highly active as they ride tricycles and build with large blocks. Staff teach them how to play traditional games, such as hopscotch. Children learn how to take care of their own needs, such as teeth brushing. When children talk about visiting the dentist, staff seize the opportunity to show them what will happen, through the use of an online video. This results in children eagerly anticipating their forthcoming appointments.

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

- The inspirational manager and dedicated staff team have a clear vision for what they want children to achieve. They strive to ensure that all children develop a love of learning and develop strong communication skills. Staff plan the curriculum well, taking each child's needs into consideration. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress.
- Managers and staff build strong relationships with families. Staff gather essential information about children, such as what they can already do, their routines, and their interests. This supports children to settle swiftly. Managers and staff work hard to establish effective methods of communication with parents and carers. They use an electronic app to share information about children's progress. The app includes a translation option which is immensely helpful for parents who speak English as an additional language. This effective communication sharing enables parents to know how to support children's learning at home.
- Children with SEND are superbly supported to learn and develop. The experienced members of staff quickly identify where there are gaps in children's learning. They seek advice for children from other professionals and work in close partnership with children's health visitors. Managers attend appointments with parents to support them and help them to understand the SEND diagnosis.

Parents report how much they appreciate their kindness and professionalism.

- Children are making good progress in their communication skills. This includes the many children who speak English as an additional language. Staff encourage young children to use words to make their needs known and to answer simple questions with a sentence. Older children are confident to speak in a group situation and use good vocabulary to describe what they have drawn. Many staff speak the same languages as children and so can offer comfort in words that are familiar to children.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents have the utmost praise for the nursery and staff. They say they are very well informed about their children's progress and next steps in learning. Staff listen to parents, value their input and see them as partners.
- Children are excited to take part in group activities, such as exploring how to make a volcano. They eagerly express their ideas of what might happen and use words in context. However, at times, some staff do not adapt the way they teach in line with the needs of children in the group. This results in some children not being challenged to the highest level.
- The highly qualified manager has embedded a rigorous system to support and monitor the development of staff. She observes staff teaching and strives for excellence for children. Staff say that they feel highly valued and supported in their roles by the provider and other colleagues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff give the utmost priority to children's safety and well-being. Safeguarding policies and procedures are very well understood. As a result, staff are highly confident in what they must do should they have any concerns about children's well-being or the conduct of their colleagues. Staff are also aware of wider safeguarding issues, such as how families may become exposed to extremist views. In-depth recruitment procedures ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Managers provide new staff with a thorough induction, including safeguarding and child supervision responsibilities.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- review the organisation and teaching during group activities to ensure all children remain fully challenged in their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY478814
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10236388
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	25
Name of registered person	Ahmed, Ovais
Registered person unique reference number	RP516299
Telephone number	01582413607
Date of previous inspection	7 October 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Companions nursery registered in 2014 and is situated in Luton, Bedfordshire. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, during school term times, from 9am to 3.15pm. There are six members of childcare staff, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery provides funded early education two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jill Hardaker

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider 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 her evaluation of the nursery.
- The inspector and manager looked around the nursery and talked about how the curriculum is planned and implemented.
- The inspector observed the quality of education and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector met to discuss the leadership and management of the nursery. The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability checks carried out on staff and safeguarding and complaints procedures.
- The inspector completed two joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents, staff and children during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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