

Inspection of Priory Parkside Pre-school

Kingsland Campus, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5PY

Inspection date: 16 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are secure and settled. They thoroughly enjoy attending this warm, welcoming pre-school. Children reflect staff's enthusiasm and excitement. For instance, children listen intently and follow instructions as they enthusiastically join in with a parachute activity. They move the parachute slowly and quickly, working together to keep small balls on top of it. Activities such as this also help children to develop their physical skills, such as control and coordination. Children have positive attitudes and persevere at tasks. For example, they are pleased when they learn how to catch fish using magnetic fishing rods. Children are kind and caring, for instance, passing one another toys and readily taking turns. They learn about their community and other ways of life, for example through fundraising events and activities to celebrate festivals.

Staff understand the possible effects of the COVID-19 lockdowns. They noted that children's communication skills were a weaker area and offer additional support to develop these skills. Children learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, they learn how to use scissors and other tools safely and effectively. Children have opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, they use role-play dentist equipment and practise cleaning model teeth.

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

- Staff use secure procedures to assess what children have learned and plan what they need to learn next. The manager closely monitors this, ensuring that all children make good progress. She supports staff in quickly identifying where children need extra help, making sure that no child falls behind. The manager has a very good knowledge of each child and uses additional funding effectively to offer children further opportunities that promote their development.
- The manager offers staff regular supervision, enabling them to review and develop their work. The manager and staff complete additional training, putting any new knowledge into practice. For example, they have developed their understanding of how life events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can affect children, and take this into account in their interactions with children.
- Staff understand the importance of supporting children to develop their communication skills. All children learn basic sign language. This aids early communication and particularly supports children who speak English as an additional language. Staff interact well with children, helping them to become confident in speaking. Older children use their good language skills, for example, as they explain their drawings, confidently describing 'rectangles' and 'hexagons'.
- Children show an enthusiastic enjoyment of books. For example, children act out a favourite story outside. They laugh as they eagerly remember the words,

going on to discuss the difference between 'under', 'over' and 'through'.

- The manager and staff have an exceptionally sensitive understanding of each child. They adapt routines and the play areas to meet children's needs and ensure that children are secure, happy and comfortable. This sensitive approach particularly aids children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and they make good progress.
- Children have many opportunities to remember and practise what they have learned. For example, at the end of their singing session, children competently state the names of the songs and characters as the staff member puts the prompts back into the bag.
- Parents speak highly of the pre-school. They feel that staff genuinely care about the children and offer them good support in settling and building friendships. Parents report that staff communicate well with them, listening carefully to what parents say and helping them to build on their children's learning.
- The routines during periods of transition, such as lunchtime, are not always as well organised as possible. At these times, children's play is sometimes interrupted and some children become restless and are not able to engage fully in the routines and learning opportunities.
- Staff generally offer children support in developing their independence. However, on occasion, staff do things for children that they could do themselves, such as pouring their water and putting children's coats on for them. This sometimes confuses children and does not promote their independence to the optimum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a very clear understanding of safeguarding. They are confident in recognising possible signs that could indicate welfare concerns in a child's life. They know how to report these to the appropriate professional. Staff understand the procedure to follow should they have any concerns about the behaviour of another staff member. They have a good knowledge of wider issues, such as the effects of radicalisation. Staff are aware of the potential risks associated with use of the internet and take effective action to protect 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 better manage periods of transition, such as mealtimes and when children are waiting to go home
- support staff to consistently follow the pre-school's agreed approaches to promoting children's independence.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY460706
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10264370
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	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	36
Name of registered person	Wilkinson, Sarah Jayne
Registered person unique reference number	RP515778
Telephone number	07972702753
Date of previous inspection	13 June 2017

Information about this early years setting

Priory Parkside Pre-school registered in 2013. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff, all of who hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one with qualified teacher status. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kelly Eyre

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 provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager, who is also the owner of the pre-school, joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspector observed staff interaction with children during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- Meetings were held between the inspector and the manager. The inspector looked at relevant documentation and saw evidence of the suitability of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, children and parents at appropriate times 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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