

Inspection of Merry Poppets Nursery

BLD 942, RAF Henlow, HENLOW, Bedfordshire SG16 6DN

Inspection date: 12 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	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and motivated to learn during their time at nursery. They show a strong sense of belonging, as they settle quickly. Children independently choose from well-planned resources to meet their interests. For example, babies find 'treasure' in the sand tray. Younger children stir and scoop water and rose petals to make 'potions'. Staff interact with children thoughtfully to promote their learning. For example, pre-school children study a vase with flowers and use their imagination to paint their own pictures. Staff praise children, who smile with pride at their achievement.

Children develop their independence. Older children are becoming competent at putting on their waterproof suits and boots. They choose their snacks and pour their own drinks. Children know that they need to wash their hands before eating and after wiping their noses. Staff encourage all children to use a knife and fork correctly. Pre-school children are learning important skills to get them ready for school. Children's behaviour is good. They cooperate and share ideas about making dinner in the home corner. They understand daily routines and know when it is time to help tidy up. This helps to ensure a calm environment, where children show positive attitudes to their learning.

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

- The dedicated leadership team and staff team have worked hard to improve the nursery since the previous inspection. Staff receive compulsory training, regular observations, and the manager provides relevant feedback. This helps to maintain the quality of teaching to a good level. Nonetheless, the leadership team recognises that the monitoring of staff practice is not consistent enough to ensure high-quality teaching across the nursery.
- Children benefit from the clear focus on developing healthy lifestyles. They enjoy a wide range of fruit and healthy drinks for snack time. They learn about the importance of different food groups and the effect it has on their bodies. Children talk about milk containing calcium, which helps keep their bones and teeth strong.
- Children receive a range of opportunities to develop their language and broaden their vocabulary. Staff ensure that vocabulary is relevant to the children's experiences. They repeat words back to children so that they can learn to pronounce them accurately. This helps children to become effective communicators. All children participate in lots of singing, and staff talk to children during daily care routines, such as at nappy changing times.
- Staff ensure that they form good relationships with parents. They share information about children's progress and learning. Staff find out about children's interests and experiences from home. Leaders provide parents with

information on a range of subjects, such as child development, sleep and toilet training. Parents speak highly of the nursery and feel included in their children's learning.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who require additional support are quickly identified. The leadership team and staff work hard to monitor them closely. They put appropriate strategies in place to meet the individual needs of children. Relationships with other professionals are strong. The manager shares information with other agencies regularly regarding children's welfare and development. This helps all children to make good progress in their learning and development.
- Older children participate in group times to practise their listening and concentration skills. They sit together and discover items in a box. Babies sit to listen to stories and songs. However, group times do not always fully meet the needs of all children. Occasionally, group times are too large or last for long periods. Consequently, some children lose interest and become distracted.
- Staff skilfully weave mathematics and number into the children's play. For instance, younger children count toy dinosaurs. Staff challenge older children to try simple addition and match the quantity to the number.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an established safeguarding culture that ensures staff have a detailed understanding and awareness of swiftly recognising a child who may be at risk of harm. Designated safeguarding leads and all staff regularly refresh their child protection training and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. Staff are clear about how to report any allegations against other staff members. They understand wider issues, such as the dangers associated with exposure to extreme views. Staff appreciate the potential risks linked to use of the internet and take appropriate 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:

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice to develop their knowledge and understanding of how children learn so that all children benefit from a consistently high-quality learning experience
- review the implementation of group times, to maximise the learning opportunities for every child.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY468971
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10222405
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	106
Number of children on roll	113
Name of registered person	Merry Poppets Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP527580
Telephone number	01462 850242
Date of previous inspection	21 January 2022

Information about this early years setting

Merry Poppets Nursery registered in 2013. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The provider and area manager hold a level 6 qualification. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, except bank holidays. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Topham

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the deputy manager.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the nominated individual and leadership team about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The leadership team showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

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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