

Inspection of The Lodge Playgroup

Daubeney Middle School, Orchard Street, Kempston, BEDFORD MK42 7PS

Inspection date: 29 January 2024

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 enjoy attending this welcoming, nurturing setting. They have secure relationships with staff, helping them to settle quickly. Staff respect children's individuality and have high expectations. Children respond to this positive environment and are confident in their play and exploration, gaining skills that support their future learning. Children concentrate on their play and often set themselves challenges. For example, older children line up items and state the sizes. They add further items, thinking about the additional sizes and naming these, such as 'bigger, biggest' and 'smallest'.

With support from staff, children learn to assess risks and understand safety. For example, children climb onto a wooden block and check the area is clear before jumping off. Staff offer children practical opportunities to learn about healthy practices. For instance, children explore model teeth, using toothbrushes and toy dentist equipment as they talk about how to keep teeth clean. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and their support to children reflects this. They talk calmly with children about emotions and help them to understand their behaviour. Children respond well and show a growing maturity in resolving minor conflicts. Staff are sensitive to the possible effects of the COVID-19 lockdowns. They offer children additional support in understanding emotions and interacting with others.

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

- Managers and staff work very well as a team. They share a genuine enjoyment of working with children and a commitment to continuously reviewing and developing practice at the setting. Staff receive regular supervision. They state that they feel their contributions are valued. Staff work well with other professionals, helping to ensure that children's care is consistent and they receive pertinent support.
- Staff know the children well. They use this knowledge and their experience to ensure that their curriculum is practical and supports all children in building on their learning and making good progress. Thorough monitoring of children's development means that any weaker areas are quickly addressed. The manager's good understanding of each child means that additional funding is used well to offer children additional opportunities and to promote their development.
- Children gain good language and communication skills. Staff introduce new vocabulary and check that children understand this. Children then use these words as they play, for example remembering that they are measuring in 'centimetres'. Staff interact sensitively with children, building their language skills and their confidence to speak. They repeat words, speak clearly and talk about

what children are doing. This particularly aids children who speak English as an additional language and they make good progress.

- Staff share their love of books, reading with excitement and expression. Children reflect this, often choosing books to look at independently or sharing them with others. They listen intently as staff read, eagerly answering questions and remembering the characters and storyline.
- Staff have a good knowledge of child development. They build on children's physical skills in preparation for early writing. For example, children explore paint and ice in a tray. They develop their grip as they pick up the ice. They use their larger muscles as they make large, swirling patterns in the paint.
- Specific activities and discussions support children in gaining an early awareness of diversity and sparks their interest in finding out more. For example, children talk about the different festivals they celebrate at home. They bring in traditional dishes to share, talking about the foods and the customs associated with these.
- Parents speak highly of the setting. They note the good progress their children are making, particularly in their speech and interactions. Parents praise staff and their good communication. They report that ongoing discussions and written information aid them in understanding what children are learning and building on this at home.
- Children enjoy their interactions with staff, who generally encourage them to build on their play. For example, when children use a tape measure, staff encourage them to correctly locate the start of the tape and to read the numbers to determine their height. However, on occasion, staff do not use these opportunities as much as possible to fully challenge the most-able children and to consistently engage the youngest ones.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- aid staff in further building on children's learning, for example, for the most-able children and to engage the youngest children, to fully extend their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY369948
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10316845
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	27
Name of registered person	Lodge Playgroup Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP518972
Telephone number	07827 297342
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2018

Information about this early years setting

The Lodge Playgroup registered at its current premises in 2008. The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The playgroup opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm from Monday to Thursday and from 9am until midday on Friday. The playgroup provides funded early education places 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 setting.
- The manager 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 reviewed outdoor activities with the manager.
- Meetings were held between the inspector, the manager and the office 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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