Inspection of Ladybird Forest Pre-School Ampthill

Queens Road, Ampthill, BEDFORD MK45 2TD

Inspection date:	7 February 2025

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
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

Staff create an exciting environment, which captivates children's attention, bringing a sense of awe and wonder to their learning. Children have a good understanding of the pre-school's routine. Staff model expected behaviour, and there is a calm atmosphere in the pre-school. Staff regularly talk to children about how they are feeling and build on their emotional literacy. A new 'calm room' provides children with a safe space where they have time to explore and control their emotions, and staff have seen how this has a positive impact on children. Staff regularly praise children for their achievements throughout the day. This helps to increase children's self-esteem.

Children benefit from outings in the local community as they build on their knowledge of the world around them. A recent visit to the local fire station brought learning to life. Children are imaginative. They pretend to make magic potions. Using pipettes, spoons and bowls to mix different ingredients, they talk about what they have made with their friends. In the garden area, children take risks while they climb on the tyres and planks, balancing and strengthening their core muscles. During movement time indoors, children move their bodies in different ways with coloured scarves. Across the pre-school, children make excellent progress in their physical development.

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

- The pre-school has a secure settling-in policy for all children. Home visits provide staff with the opportunity to get to know children in their own familiar environment. Staff gather baseline information and talk to parents about any concerns they may have about their children. Settling-in processes at the pre-school are individual for each child. This allows them the time they need to feel safe and secure at the pre-school. A strong key-person system is embedded in practice and supports children's personal development effectively.
- The provider works closely with local schools and other providers to share good practice. The pre-school uses information from schools about previous children's data to continually improve and develop their curriculum. This puts children's development at the heart of the pre-school.
- The provider has a clear approach to the curriculum for the pre-school. Leaders work closely with the staff team to discuss what they want the children to learn while they are at the pre-school. Staff plan activities that strengthen children's knowledge and development. However, staff do not always have the skills to implement their ideas effectively. As a result, children do not always benefit from the intended learning to develop their skills and learning.
- The pre-school forest school curriculum gives children access to activities they may not otherwise have. Staff encourage children to take part in risky play. They

teach them about safety, which allows children to be confident in their learning. Children talk of their love of making cakes in the mud kitchen area.

- Staff work with parents to develop knowledge of being healthy. Information is provided to parents on healthy lunch boxes, and children enjoy showing staff what they have to eat each day. The provider is aware of the importance of oral hygiene. Children take part in activities about toothbrushing and gain awareness of the sugar content in food and drinks. This is developed further with home learning opportunities.
- The provider puts communication and language development at the heart of the pre-school. Children have free access to books and story sacks, which helps to develop a love of books. During activities, some staff talk to children as they play. However, this is not always consistent, as some staff do not always build on children's vocabulary and extend their language skills. Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, using a variety of communication techniques such as picture cards and sign language. However, not all staff use these and, therefore, children do not seek them out as a way of communicating.
- The provider is very passionate about the pre-school. Supervision meetings are completed regularly and are used to build on staff practice. Staff have access to a wide range of training opportunities and say they feel very well supported by the provider.

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:

- strengthen staff's knowledge of how to implement the pre-school curriculum so that they build on children's existing skills consistently well
- embed strategies to provide more consistent support to all children to build on children's vocabulary and language development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY541389
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10368646
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 7
Total number of places	43
Number of children on roll	62
Name of registered person	Ladybird Forest Pre-School Ampthill
Registered person unique reference number	RP541388
Telephone number	01525406703
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2019

Information about this early years setting

Ladybird Forest Pre-School Ampthill registered in 2017. It employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including the manager who holds an early years qualification at level 6. The pre-school operates from 7.45am until 6pm, Monday to Friday, during term time. It also operates a holiday club during some school holidays from 9am until 4pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for all eligible children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Lisa Smith

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all the areas of the pre-school and discussed their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- Parents spoke to the inspector during the inspection and she took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of all staff and committee members.
- The inspector spoke to children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spent time in the forest school area as part of the inspection.

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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