

# Applecroft Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 105210  
**Inspection date** 18/01/2011  
**Inspector** Lisa Paisley

**Setting address** Applecroft Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU2 8BB

**Telephone number** 01582 454637

**Email**

**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## Description of the setting

Applecroft Pre-School opened in 1971. The setting operates from Ross Park Scout Hut and is situated within walking distance of schools and shops in the Stopsley area of Luton, Bedfordshire. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 9.15am to 11.45am and 12.45pm to 3.15pm and a lunch club from 11.45pm to 12.45pm.

This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. There are currently 55 children aged from two to four years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and wider areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff, of whom six including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. An additional staff member is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children in the early years age range are making good progress as staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and early child development. The setting is fully inclusive as all children make a positive contribution while at the pre-school. There is a strong focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, ensuring that all children are confident and capable within the pre-school. Being healthy and staying safe are also positive aspects of the provision. Self-evaluation has been developed, however, further review is required to ensure that it is fully embedded and reflective of the provision.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further children's profiles to include parents' comments and initial assessments
- develop further self-evaluation systems to ensure that they are fully reflective of the provision's practice.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

All required documentation is in place and effectively maintained to promote the secure day to day management of the provision. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and review staff's current practices. Robust vetting procedures including criminal records checks and health declarations ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. Staff have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children. The written safeguarding policy is in place and includes a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member. Staff also clearly understand safe practices and this includes the effective supervision of children and the storage and use of mobile phones. Risk assessments are comprehensive and are effectively implemented by the staff. They clearly identify any concerns, for example the carpet area in the main entrance and a fire exit. There are clear procedures in place for the arrival and departure of children to and from the setting. Staff are vigilant about the safety of the children as they continually monitor the safety of the setting and how many children and staff are on site at any one time. Effective fire procedures are in place, which include the maintenance of fire equipment and practising fire evacuation procedures with the children. Good systems are in place for the checking and maintenance of equipment and resources, further minimising risks to children.

The organisation of daily routines including staff deployment supports children's play and learning experiences and promotes a positive play and learning environment. There is a good selection of resources and equipment across the six areas of learning and they are effectively organised, encouraging children's independence and choice and promoting an inclusive environment. There is a clear management structure in place and there are regular team meetings and appraisals. Teamwork and commitment are good, as staff work well together and are very experienced and knowledgeable in their role. Some staff have additional responsibilities, such as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and Safeguarding Officer, and they are very experienced in their roles. Reflective practice is beginning to be developed and this includes a commitment to further professional training through attending short training courses, for example on leadership and management. Consequently, all staff keep up to date with any changes. Self-evaluation has been developed, however further development is required to ensure that it is fully reflective of the setting's practice.

Partnership work with both parents and other agencies is good. Staff work hard at developing good relationships with parents as they listen to their views and contributions. They support families in meeting children's needs. The admission procedure enables new children to settle into the pre-school effectively, as staff endeavour to support families in a positive and effective manner. This includes home visits and the sharing of information. Regular newsletters, the notice boards and ongoing verbal discussions ensure that communication is clear and consistent. Parents complimentary comments include staff's experience and knowledge of early years and also the structure of the session which provides children with good play and learning experiences. Good systems are in place with others delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure transitions are effective and continuity

of care is promoted.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Planning arrangements have been successfully implemented within the pre-school as staff have worked in developing the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff undertake a range of observations of the children, for example tracking and spontaneous observations, and this information informs future next steps in children's development, future activity plans and children's developmental records. Children's individual profiles provide a rich textual narrative of children's developmental progress, however, initial assessments on new children are not clearly identified and parents' comments are not always systematically recorded. Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points. There is a good range of resources, posters and play equipment that reflects cultural diversity. Children learn about the wider world through daily routines and planned activities including Chinese New Year, Eid, St Patrick's Day and Christmas.

Children are happy and confident in the pre-school as they settle quickly into activities. Registration time at the beginning of the sessions enables children to settle and provides good learning experiences such as number work. Children are curious and inquisitive about their play and learning experiences. Staff are purposeful and considerate in their interactions with the children, as they always take time to comfort and settle new children in the setting. Children are confident talkers as they use a range of vocabulary to express their thoughts, feelings and recent experiences, for example the process of freezing water and sledging during the recent snowfall. The book corner provides a suitable area for children to share books and stories. The recently implemented 'sensory tent' provides space for children to rest and relax and experience a range of sensory lights. Older and more able children are confident in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy as they count up to ten and beyond and they use information communication technology with skill and ease. Children's imaginations and self-expressions are effectively supported through the good range of creative activities and the range of opportunities for role play, for example, dressing up clothes and the home corner.

Children's behaviour is good as staff successfully create an environment that values positive behaviour. They form close friendships with their peers and they are cooperative with their friends as they share and take turns in their play. Positive contribution is promoted as staff effectively praise and encourage children throughout the day, and both older children and staff are positive role models. Children enjoy exploring a range of creative activities both indoors and outside in the garden and they work hard at completing self-chosen tasks. The garden area offers an enjoyable play space for children; they confidently ride tricycles, play with balls and use paint brushes. Children also have opportunities to explore and learn about the natural world as they plant fruit, vegetables and sunflowers in the summer months. They enjoy trips to the local park where they observe changes in the seasons and play with the autumn leaves. There are regular visitors into the

provision to talk about their role, for example a fire officer and lollipop lady, and children visit the local elderly home to deliver harvest festival parcels.

Children's health and safety is promoted well by the staff as they ensure that they know about their own personal hygiene and how to be safe within the environment. Children practise regular fire drills with the staff and they continually remind children and explain to them how to be safe, for example, using play equipment and walking around the indoor play space. They are reminded to wash their hands and wipe their noses when needed. Nappy changing procedures and the regular disinfecting of surfaces further minimise cross-infection. Children who are unwell or require medication are effectively supported by the staff as they have a good understanding of procedures to follow. Healthy eating is a fundamental part of the provision as snacks are healthy and nutritious and children have access to fresh drinking water to ensure that they remain hydrated at all times. Staff also work with parents with regards to the provision of healthy lunches. Good systems are in place to support children with dietary needs, and this includes obtaining all the relevant information and writing detailed care plans. Overall, their health and well-being is effectively promoted.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*  
*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*  
*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*  
*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met