



Puddleduck Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY308572 |
| Inspection date | 10 May 2006 |
| Inspector | Melissa Cox |
| Setting Address | Howbery Park, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8BA |
| Telephone number | 01491 839 815 |
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| Registered person | Hayden Associates Ltd |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Puddleduck Nursery and The Park Club registered in March 2000 in Wallingford and moved premises in July 2005. It now operates from a single storey premises based on a small, rural industrial site, which is situated in the small village of Crowmarsh Gifford in South Oxfordshire. A maximum of 57 children may attend the provision at any one time. The facility is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 all year round, and offers wrap around care for children attending local schools. All children share

access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 82 children aged 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff. Five of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards additional qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, stimulating and hygienic environment. Their welfare and health needs remain protected through the implementation and consistent use of a comprehensive range of health forms. Adults help children gain a thorough understanding of staying healthy, for example, when children use tissues to wipe their nose. Cross infection is minimised through staff adhering to the sick child policy. Children have a good awareness of the importance of good personal hygiene. They understand why they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating food, through regular explanations from staff.

Children learn about a healthy diet as they are provided with healthy and nutritious food which is prepared and cooked on the premises. Menus are carefully prepared and reviewed to ensure that children receive a varied and balanced diet, helping to promote their good health. Children's particular dietary needs and preferences are well catered for. They are offered a good range of meals and snacks throughout the day and children eagerly enjoy these. Although children have access to drinks during these planned meal times, fresh drinking water is not made readily available to all children. In addition, food is left uncovered in the nursery room for some time before being served to some of the children and as a result it is cold and unappetising.

Children enjoy an interesting range of activities which enables them to develop their physical capabilities. They are encouraged to play outdoors and experience wet weather conditions on occasion, although challenge for more able children is sometimes limited. The children use a range of small tools with increasing control and confidence, for example, glue spreaders and scissors. They have many opportunities to explore their environment, for example, walks around the local area and are supported well by staff working alongside them during play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children freely explore the warm, stimulating environment. They have access to a range of resources that stimulate their interest. Young children benefit from natural materials being used to support their play. They are confident to select resources from low level storage units which successfully fosters their growing independence.

Robust safety procedures are in place to keep children safe. Risk assessment are conducted daily on toys and premises, and all appliances are regularly checked and stamped. Effective staff teaching develops the children's awareness of potential hazards. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through daily discussions with the staff, for example, they know how to use outdoor resources safely and to always walk in the hallway. Effective systems are in place to ensure children are collected by named persons, with suitable arrangements for emergencies. Staff conduct good safety measures to protect children from harm. All staff have accessed training in health and safety, and follow comprehensive written policies and procedures

Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues and the action they would take in order to protect children from harm. Staff are aware to report concerns to the appropriate agency, should they have any concerns regarding children's welfare. This is supported by the staff attending child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies are provided with lots of sensory experiences that are good for their early development, including messy activities. They enjoy sounds, intonation and musical instruments, and they explore instruments by putting them to their mouths and chewing them. Close contact is promoted by all staff and lots of laughter and communication between the babies and the staff is experienced.

Young children enjoy investigating natural materials through the use of a treasure basket containing different materials made of wood, cloth, and metal. The toddlers enjoy water, sand and creative play, as they express their ideas eagerly. They observe, smell, touch and taste different materials and enjoy investigating how things work, what they are made of and what they taste like. Staff plan purposeful and exciting activities under the Birth to three matters framework. They make note of children's achievements, however, these records are not updated frequently enough to provide sufficient detail to plan for children's individual needs.

Children are happy and contented. They enjoy the company of the adult carer's and good relationships are evident, as the younger children actively seek out familiar adults when they are unsure. This supports children's overall development and fosters their emotional security.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and plan a range of interesting activities across the six areas of learning. The staff team work well together and are developing the planning systems. However, these systems are not

sufficiently developed to ensure that staff are clear about the learning objectives for activities. Therefore, planned activities are not always used productively to extend the older, more able children or fully to cover the breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff use appropriate assessment methods to monitor the children's development. However, these are not effectively used to identify and plan the next steps in children's learning. As a result, staff do not always fully challenge children to further their learning, and activities are often too adult directed. The use of time and resources is not always effective and children sometimes play at one activity for long periods. For example, in the morning children sit for nearly an hour looking at books, listening to a story and singing songs, whilst waiting for their lunch to be served and cleared away.

Children are developing satisfactory levels of independence and are encouraged to dress themselves for outdoor play, toilet themselves and help to tidy away. Children respond well to instructions and show good consideration towards others. They learn to share and take turns, and play well alongside each other. They are forming close relationships with staff and often initiate interaction. Children enjoy singing and competently sing songs from memory. They begin to recognise their written name on flash cards, and have some opportunities to practise mark-making.

Children clearly enjoy listening to stories and show a growing understanding of how books work. They learn to express themselves clearly, but staff do not always exploit to the full chances to extend children's vocabulary. However, children have limited opportunities to learn to recognise their names. They are learning to count to 10 and beyond and to use mathematical language, although they have fewer chances to solve simple mathematical problems. Children develop an awareness of technology through some programmable toys, as they occasionally have access to a computer. The role-play area helps to foster the children's imagination, and they enjoy dressing up using a range of hats and outfits.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children confidently contribute to the life of the nursery. They are warmly greeted by staff on arrival and settle quickly to activities. Children learn about their own culture and the culture of others. They celebrate their birthdays and events, such as Christmas, Mother's Day, Diwali and Chinese New Year. There are some multi-cultural toys reflecting positive images but few displayed pictures and limited resources reflecting disability. Babies and young children develop a good sense of belonging and self-assurance. Low level mirrors enable babies to explore what they look like and who they are, and children become confident through the good support given by staff. Children are well behaved and their good behaviour is reinforced, in a positive environment, through constant praise and encouragement. Children learn to share and take turns and have respect for each other, consistently using 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff follow a comprehensive behaviour management policy, and the designated co-ordinator ensures appropriate strategies are used to manage the children's behaviour. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the nursery at any time and information is shared through informal daily discussion. Parents receive an information pack that includes statements on policies and procedures, and some information on the Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of future events and up-dated staff information. Staff complete, and share with parents, daily diaries and 'What I Have Done Today' on babies and young children. Parents are informed of the Foundation Stage through discussion with the key-worker, and there is some information displayed on the six areas of learning. Systems are in place to access their children development records and to arrange to meet with staff to discuss their child progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for by qualified and experienced staff. There are effective procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff and staffing ratios are maintained. Staff work with small groups of children and the key-worker system provides good continuity of care, helping children to feel secure. Staff receive comprehensive induction training, and designated staff co-ordinate specific areas, such as child protection and health and safety. Training needs are identified through regular staff meetings and appraisal, and some staff have received training on new initiatives, such as Birth to three matters. Additional staff are employed for cooking and cleaning.

Space and resources are organised well in the rooms for babies and young children, but some areas within the play rooms for older children are not always conducive to fully encouraging children's choices. Good consideration has been given to the suitability of furniture and toys to promote a stimulating, welcoming and safe environment for young children to learn and develop. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the setting and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager is keen to improve the outcomes for children and recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Key-staff have accessed training in the Foundation Stage, but not all staff who work with funded children have clear directions to ensure their teaching methods fully challenge older, more able children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff have effective and sufficient hygiene practises throughout the nursery in relation to appropriate serving of food and drink, and that they are consistently implemented

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and how to use every day activities and routines to promote children's learning in all areas of development
- improve systems to monitor and evaluate teaching, the curriculum and children's individual progress ensuring effective learning takes place and observations of children's achievements are used to plan the next steps in their individual learning

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