



Puddleducks Pre-School Provision

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224171
Inspection date	16 November 2006
Inspector	Juliette Jennings
Setting Address	John Wilkinson C P School, Coalport Road, BROSELEY, Shropshire, TF12 5AN
Telephone number	01952 884420
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Registered person	Puddleducks Pre-School Provision
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Puddleducks Pre-School opened in April 1997. It operates from a single-roomed demountable building within the grounds of John Wilkinson Primary School in Broseley, Shropshire. The group serves the local area. They have use of a designated play area for outdoor play and also have use of part of the school grounds to support a 'Forest School' project, for which Wednesday sessions are set aside.

The group is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:45 to 15:15. A lunch club facility is provided between 11:30 and 12:45 on a daily basis. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 36 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 25 funded three and four-year-olds. The setting has procedures in place to support children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five staff working with the children on a part-time basis. Of these, four hold appropriate childcare qualifications whilst one staff member is working towards NVQ Level two. There are three staff members who hold the Forest School Practitioner Award. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The provision for children to be healthy is outstanding. Children benefit greatly from the access to fresh air and the outdoor environment. In particular, the 'Forest Schools' project gives them excellent opportunities to explore nature, spend time in fresh air, light and space, whilst experiencing the range of weather in their waterproof clothing. They learn about how things grow, how to care for animals and birds and how to identify various leaves and berries. Staff follow good procedures which allow children to enjoy a clean and hygienic environment and to learn about keeping themselves clean and germ-free. Documentation is in order to record children's accidents or administration of medication and staff are trained in first aid, so would know what to do in an emergency situation in order to meet children's needs.

Children's physical development is excellent, they have very good opportunities to develop in this area, rolling down the bank from top to bottom, running through the willow and in and out of the trees and bushes, picking up small sticks and leaves, squeezing mud and scrunching up the natural materials in the wood. In addition, they have good opportunities to climb, balance, move over and under, through and in-between, for example, on stilts, using wheeled toys, experiencing the tyres and using the climbing frame. More detailed physical skills are supported because children use resources such as peg boards with pegs, playdough and pencils, patting and pouring sand and using paint brushes to paint pictures.

Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating. They choose from a healthy range of snacks such as a variety of fruit, breads, smoothies, winter soup, vegetables, toast, crumpets, pancakes and fresh drinking water is available throughout the session which they can access independently. Milk is also offered within the rolling snack provision. Children enjoy healthy packed lunches provided by parents and are supported to eat within a sociable atmosphere, discussing recent events and other matters that are important to them. The setting are currently developing better lunch club information for parents, to include ideas for healthy eating.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy and benefit from a colourful, stimulating, child-orientated and accessible space. The areas children use are bright and interesting and children are extremely confident, happy and secure in the space. They have very good access to a wide variety of toys, resources, equipment and natural materials which they access from mostly low-level storage and within a routine which accommodates a good mixture of free play, child-choice and some adult-focused activities. The 'Forest Schools' project and the indoor/outdoor learning environment promotes

children's learning by utilising a wide range of varying materials, resources and experiences to reinforce learning.

There are good systems in place for ensuring that children are safe on the premises, for example, a secure entry system, a visitor record and very good supervision of children at all times. However, the procedure in relation to a lost child at the setting does not include a timescale for a search, so it is unclear how long staff would search prior to contacting external agencies. Thorough risk assessments are in place and daily safety checks are carried out by competent staff, which work in practice. No safety issues were highlighted at the time of the inspection. In relation to the children's safety whilst accessing the 'Forest School', children have very good opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe. They participate in games and discussions about how to call for help if they are lost or to leave the berries for the birds. Thorough risk assessments are effective in ensuring that children are safe and secure whilst accessing this aspect.

Policies, procedures and other information is in place which help to ensure that children's welfare is promoted effectively. Training is accessed regularly and this helps to ensure that staff are aware of what to do if there is a concern about any of the children. There is a thorough child protection procedure available to all staff, although it does not reflect recent legislative changes.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children aged under three years are involved, busy and occupied with the wide range of opportunities on offer to them within this exciting and extremely stimulating environment. They are developing their confidence very well, and becoming skilful communicators and competent learners with the skilled and enthusiastic interaction from staff. They thoroughly enjoy spending their time using age-appropriate activities which encourage their physical and cognitive development, for example, play dough, free-painting and challenging climbing equipment. Social and emotional development is supported through opportunities to play alongside or with other, older children and concepts such as sharing and turn-taking are reinforced through positive role-modelling and interaction from staff. Staff continue to implement the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in planning for children's development and learning, particularly in relation to assessment.

All children have an outstanding, exciting and fantastic opportunity on a weekly basis to develop their skills in all areas of development through the provision of the 'Forest School' initiative. All children are benefiting greatly from this wonderfully exciting opportunity. Children learn about the world around them, work together to complete tasks, learn about aspects of safety, learn to take turns and try out exciting new things such as rolling down the bank. They have a fantastic time, learning through valuable play experiences with excellent and skilful adult support. In addition, the provision of an indoor/outdoor learning environment supports children very well to develop and learn through valuable play opportunities.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding

Children are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are truly learning through their play and the provision of the indoor/outdoor learning environment, combined with the great opportunities in 'Forest Schools', is ensuring that children are developing very well towards the early learning goals. Exploration with paint, dough, dry and damp sand, mud, leaves and a wide range of natural materials helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. They explore and investigate, finding out about the world around them when they comment that the leaves are on the floor and they crunch under their feet. They recall that the round things are acorns and that they fall off the tree, talking about the squirrels eating them. Children comment that the berries are for the birds and not for them to eat. Children aged three and four years develop mathematical concepts when they make patterns using green and yellow pegs or use positional language such as over, under and through whilst exploring in the 'Forest School' or climbing the frame in the outdoor area. Children use numbers and more able children can count confidently to 14.

Children learn to work together as a team when playing the hide and seek game, which also reinforces their understanding of how to stay safe. They show care and concern for others when guiding them to the correct group and listen carefully and with interest to what is being discussed with them. They thoroughly enjoy stories and respond with comments about the squirrel and that he is really small. Three and four-year-olds are developing their early writing skills because they use the post-it pads and pencils, which have been provided in the outdoor area by staff, to write their shopping lists. They spend some time writing their shopping lists and staff help them set up a shop in another area of the play area so that they can use their shopping list for a purpose. They are, therefore, using writing for a purpose and linking their skills within their imaginary role play. This enjoyment of role play is further highlighted as children use the climbing frame outside as an ice cream parlour, asking the other children who drive up in the coupe cars 'would they like sprinkles on their ice cream?'

Children benefit greatly from staff's knowledge and understanding of how children learn best, through valuable experience, exploration, creativity and discovery. Staff ensure that children have time to revisit their experiences, try out new things and develop their ideas in their play and this helps to reinforce their learning. Children relish their time in the setting and have an excellent attitude to learning. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. They develop confidence and a strong sense of self through positive interaction with adults and the provision of an exciting play space.

Planning accommodates this ethos of child-initiated play and staff understand that children can make progress in all areas of development through the provision of a rich, stimulating environment with some adult-focused activities, the latter of which are well-organised and take into consideration the development needs of the children, for example, the choice of different sized pegs and boards for children of varying ages and abilities. Children's specific learning needs are accommodated within the planning system, with staff implementing focused activities to support children, with support from parents and outside agencies.

The assessment system is effective and clearly tracks children's development through the stepping stones. In addition, this is enhanced by staff's thorough knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and their ability to highlight what children need to do next. The staff have a clear idea about how they can further improve this to increase the involvement of parents in their child's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's understanding of diversity and the world around them is promoted well through discussion, themework and age-appropriate activities. Their individual needs are accommodated well and supported within the daily routine of the setting. Independence is supported very well and children confidently make decisions about what they want to do within the indoor/outdoor learning space. They have excellent opportunities to develop their independence, self-esteem and sense of self through making choices and using the child-initiated routine to full extent. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff have a sound understanding of the processes to follow where there is a concern about children's development. They know where they can seek advice or support and work closely with parents to support children's needs. Staff are competent at drawing up specific focused plans for children's learning and involve parents in this process.

Children are enthusiastic, busy, occupied, keen and interested to learn. They motivate themselves very well and enjoy the wide range of activities which are accessed in free play or are provided by staff. Staff use appropriate techniques to foster positive behaviour, such as distraction, discussion, encouragement of independence and choice and positive praise. Unwanted behaviour is dealt with in a sympathetic, consistent and age-appropriate manner. Children are constantly praised and their efforts are acknowledged, for example, their work is displayed in a stimulating and colourful manner.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that children are cared for consistently and in accordance with their parent's wishes. This is enhanced by daily verbal feedback to ensure that parents are informed about what their children have been doing whilst attending. Consistent verbal feedback and availability of written plans helps to ensure that parents of three and four-year-olds know about what their children have been doing whilst attending. In addition, they are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning through being informed of themed activities, helping out in the session via the parent rota and know about their child's achievements through regular meetings with key staff. Parents evenings have proved to be very popular and the setting continue to develop ways of involving parents in their children's learning and enabling them to pass on what they know about their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The relationship between the staff team and committee is very strong and all have a clear overview of the setting as a whole. Regular access to training and ongoing review of policies and procedures helps staff to ensure that the provision for nursery education, for example, the change in the routine to accommodate a child-initiated learning approach has worked very well and the result is that children are learning effectively through their play and experience. Access to training has been particularly effective in the 'Forest Schools' initiative and staff have enthusiastically embraced this exciting learning opportunity and enabled children to access this to extend their learning. Staff work well together as a team, with everyone aware of their roles and responsibilities within the group.

All documentation is in very good order and in line with requirements. Paperwork is stored securely on site, ensuring children's information remains confidential. Children are cared for in line with parents' wishes, with appropriate consents and detailed information obtained from them prior to the children starting at the setting. Policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they continue to work in practice. The organisation of the space accommodates children's needs and allows them to develop and learn in a child-orientated, exciting and stimulating environment. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the setting were asked to update documentation to ensure that regulatory requirements were met, for example, ensuring the availability of a sick child policy and the availability of a current insurance certificate. These issues have all been addressed so that documentation is in place in order to meet children's needs. One safety issue was raised in relation to the safety of the strip lights and this has also been addressed, so that these are now safe. The setting was also asked to consider the organisation of the sessions to ensure children's learning needs were met. The setting have rearranged the routine and this now enables children to explore and discover through the indoor/outdoor learning space and the 'Forest Schools' project.

At the previous education inspection, the setting were asked to give children opportunities to freely use mark-making equipment and to develop their large scale movements. This has been improved through the child-initiated routine change and equipment is available to support children in these areas. Finally, the setting was asked to ensure that plans included learning outcomes, which they now do, and to involve parents in their child's learning and keep them informed about progress. The latter has been improved by the provision of open evenings and profile books and the setting continues to improve this aspect.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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):

- update the child protection statement so that it is in line with recent legislative changes. In addition, include a timescale in the lost child procedure so that all staff are clear about how long to search for a child prior to contacting other agencies.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk