



Ducklings Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337165
Inspection date	18 October 2006
Inspector	Jane Elizabeth Chappell
Setting Address	Caterham Valley Chapel, 84 Croydon Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6QD
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Registered person	Miss Joanne Anderson and Mrs Deborah Hickson
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ducklings pre-school registered under its current owners in 2006. It operates from a church hall, which consists of two large rooms, separate toilet and kitchen provision. It is situated in the centre of Caterham in Surrey and serves the local community. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during in term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12.15. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children aged two to under five years on roll. Of these seven receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school has the support of a teacher advisor employed by the local authority through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of a healthy diet. They benefit from healthy snacks, which provide them with a sound nutritional diet and promote healthy choices. This ensures children remain healthy. Staff have a good understanding of healthy eating for young children. Their individual dietary needs are respected and well catered for in agreement with parents.

Children's health needs are addressed because there are effective procedures in place for infection control. There is a good standard of hygiene in the setting and children know to wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating and cooking. Documentation for the recording of accidents and medicines are in place and are kept in accordance with the requirements and the guidance for good practice.

Children move confidently. They move freely in the setting and in the outdoor area. Children have opportunities to develop their large motor skills. Staff engage in physical activity with the children, including running games, ball games, parachute games and they offer regular outings to the local park. This encourages healthy practices and the children's understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They show good control when cutting and sticking and when cutting up vegetables to make soup.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where they grow in confidence. Space is organised well and children settle quickly on arrival. They have access to a good range of quality toys and resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children receive gentle reminders that help them to recognise their own safety needs and those of their peers. For instance, staff encourage children to walk inside the setting rather than run.

Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure their safety at all times. For example, there is always one member of staff deployed at the front door to receive children and say goodbye to the children at the end of each session ensuring that all children are collected by an appropriate adult.

Children's welfare is protected because staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection. Staff have attended training in this area and know the necessary procedures to be followed if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and relaxed. They readily approach staff for support indicating good trusting relationships. Most children express themselves clearly. They benefit from routines that are consistent; this contributes to their emotional well-being and helps them to feel secure. Children's independence is developing, as they choose between a variety of stimulating activities such as building blocks, small world toys and dressing up as animals to play in the autumn cave. Staff have undertaken training on the Birth to three matters framework to enable their further understanding of ways to promote young children's development. Children's individual needs are met well and their welfare is promoted.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Activities are planned well around the six areas of learning and include outcomes for children based on the early learning goals. The plans are creative, varied and take account of children's interests, which helps children to gain knowledge and develop their understanding of the world around them. The use of assessment overall is good, however, staff are not recording children's next steps so therefore this does not allow for staff to have clear knowledge of children's areas for progression.

Children enter the nursery happily and are eager to learn. They make independent choices and have developed good self-care skills through everyday routines, such as putting on their own coats for outside play and washing their hands before cooking activities. They play and work well together and readily take turns with popular resources. They eagerly help staff to tidy away the toys before snack time and choose who they want to sit next to, making it a sociable event with time to chat with friends.

Children are confident when matching colours and shapes, and enjoy counting as part of daily activities. For example, they practise simple calculations as to how many cups are needed at snack time. They use size language when describing the beads they have threaded onto the string, for example, longer, shorter, bigger, taller. Children begin to learn about weight and capacity when playing with the trains, for example, they discuss that if they put more engines on the train it will make it too heavy to go up the bridge.

Children learn about the world around them through planned activities and themes. Children begin to develop a sense of time and can recall significant events that have happened to them, for example, a recent autumn walk. Children confidently use information and communication technology. There is a computer available for children's use that is very popular. Staff encourage all children to use this and learn how to operate simple programmes.

Children are provided with a variety of mediums for creative play. However, freedom to explore these independently is not a regular occurrence. Children enjoy musical sessions and sing songs from memory, which are familiar to them and their peers.

Children enjoy looking at books and confidently self select stories to read and follow. They carefully turn the pages and study the pictures and text, recognising that written print has

meaning. There are regular opportunities for children to write and make marks because resources are readily available to them. Systems are in place to encourage children's recognition of their names, such as the use of name cards and the naming of children's coat pegs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. For example, the children talk about celebrations across the world, which are facilitated by meaningful activities and visits within the local community and visitors to the nursery.

The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children of all abilities are given fully inclusive care by staff, encouraging children to participate in the activities provided. This ensures children have equal opportunities to maximise their enjoyment and potential. Staff demonstrate a positive attitude towards welcoming children with learning difficulties and/or disability and appropriate systems to support them are in place. Staff have a calm and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. Overall, this results in a calm atmosphere, which helps children to behave well.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are made welcome and receive regular information concerning their children's care. Parents receive suitable information about the Foundation Stage and an informative display shows clearly how the activities are linked to the Foundation Stage. Staff work closely with parents to support their understanding of the Foundation Stage. This ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning.

A two way flow of information through parents' evenings, questionnaires, contact books, regular newsletters and daily verbal feedback ensures staff and parents are aware of children's achievements. Regular reviews are held with parents to discuss children's progress. Parents are very satisfied with the care their child receives.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by suitably qualified and appropriately vetted staff due to effective recruitment procedures. Staff have a secure understanding of child development, which helps them meet children's individual needs, and a consistent staff team ensures that children are cared for by staff that they know well. Staff have clear responsibilities and work together well as a team.

All documentation required for the safe and effective management of the setting are in place and policies and procedures work effectively in practice. Staff are vigilant about the security of the setting and the safety of the children attending. This underpins the safe management of the setting, which contributes to the welfare of the children.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The managers provide a clear ethos for the setting and demonstrate a good understanding of the settings strengths and areas that need improvement. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision, such as parents' feedback questionnaires, have already been established. Management and staff all show a strong commitment to continual development and improvement. This helps ensure that the setting meets the needs of the range of 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):

- provide children with opportunities to create independently with a variety of mediums (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- use the observations of children to help plan appropriate activities for the next steps in children's development and learning
- make improvements as indicated in the care section above

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