

# Ugley Duckling Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	204110
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Kerry Freshwater
<b>Setting Address</b>	Alsa Lodge, Alsa Street, Stansted, Essex, CM24 8SX
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<b>Registered person</b>	Caroline Anne Dawson
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Ugley Duckling Pre-school opened in 1993 and operates from a large converted barn. It is situated in Stansted, Essex. A maximum of 35 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday for 39 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 09.30 to 14.45 Monday to Thursday and 09.30-12.30 on Fridays.

There are currently 45 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine staff. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are very well protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill, because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, staff follow their sickness policy, ensuring that children are excluded for appropriate periods of time to limit the spread of infection. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the pet dogs and ensure that children do not have unsupervised access and the animals are up-to-date with inoculations. Children learn to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices, for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing. As a result, they are developing good hygiene routines for later life.

Children take part in regular physical activity, both indoors and outdoors and are therefore developing good motor skills and coordination and are learning to enjoy exercise and fresh air. For example, they throw and catch beanbags, pedal tricycles, balance on equipment, crawl through hoops and tunnels and push prams around the outside area. Inside, they complete puzzles, manipulate play dough, dig in the sand and pour water. Within the daily timetable, active play is balanced with less energetic play so that children can rest according to their needs and do not become overtired.

Children are provided with good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. They enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, such as fruit and raw vegetables and are encouraged to take regular drinks. Through group discussions children learn about the foods that are good for them.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a spacious, well-organised environment which allows them to move around safely. Staff ensure that the environment is warm and welcoming. Children's artwork, pictures and posters are attractively displayed. For example, the brightly coloured 'Noah's Ark' and 'diggers' wall displays. Activities are set out in such a way as to appeal to children and encourage their use. Risk assessments are carried out regularly, with daily checks to indoor and outdoor areas. Children use good quality, suitable and safe equipment, which is well maintained and meets their differing needs. Resources are stored safely and toys are put out at low level so that children can access them safely and independently. Children take pride in their own named drawers where they can place their book bags and safely store items brought from home.

Children are encouraged to learn to keep themselves safe through practical experiences within everyday routines. For example, regular fire drills are carried out without warning so that children learn what to do in an emergency. However, fire drill records are insufficient in detail which means that staff are unable to reflect on the evacuation procedure in the future. Staff remind children not to run inside the pre-school in case they slip over and to sit properly on chairs in case they fall off.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to keep them safe. For example, child protection training has been carried out by some staff members and all of the required documentation is available. As a result, children are appropriately safeguarded, because staff understand their role in monitoring and protecting

children's welfare and well-being and are able to put appropriate procedures in practice when necessary.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children take part in high quality activities throughout the session. They are confident in the setting and in their relationships with each other. They choose independently and are gaining in confidence, asking questions and chatting with staff and visitors. They play very happily together in small groups, in pairs and alone. They clearly enjoy each other's company and are learning to take turns and respond to others as they use the wide range of equipment provided. They move around the room confidently accessing activities and resources independently and show good levels of concentration.

Children are motivated and engrossed in a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate activities. They enjoy regular use of a wide range of creative materials, including paint and drawing equipment, play dough, glue and collage materials, to support their creative development. They begin to know and recognise the first letter of their name as they use it to create a bright collage picture; they look closely at an aeroplane model and recreate their own pictures of it using pens and white boards; they create leaf collage pictures and construct with different boxes and fixings. Children use their imaginations as they play in the home corner, pretending to prepare food and hand out ice-cream to passers by.

Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three' framework and provide a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support young children's development and learning. For example, children extend their language skills as they listen intently to stories at story time or look at books on their own or with an adult. Their physical development and coordination is supported in a variety of interesting ways both indoors and outside. They develop their fine motor skills as they cut with scissors or use paint brushes and glue spreaders. Staff regularly monitor, assess and record children's continuing progress and development and use these records to plan the next stage in children's learning. However, the development of babies and children under three years may not be fully supported as planning does not take into account the younger age group.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan the curriculum to promote children's progression towards the early learning goals. Staff use a variety of teaching methods that help all children learn effectively. For example, they use open-ended questions to develop children's thinking and language. Staff interact constantly with the children and through their involvement, are able to identify areas where children may need more support, such as introducing more drama activities to support children's language. Staff make very effective use of their time as well as the available resources and accommodation in order to develop and support children's learning. For example, they involve themselves in both child and adult-led activities and are always alert to what is happening in the room. Consequently, they know what children are doing and are able to offer them support whenever and wherever it is most needed. Children's development and progress are assessed against the Stepping Stones and staff ensure that they appropriately challenged and stimulated in order that they reach their full potential. Evaluation of activities is now taking place and staff use this to reflect on the activities provided, making changes where they feel necessary. For example, physical activity sessions were proving difficult with the whole group, as staff needed to provide more support, guidance and build the confidence

of younger children. This was impacting on the benefits for older and more able children. Staff adjusted these sessions to provide the activities in smaller groups to ensure that all children were involved and fully stimulated. Children are keen to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences.

Children show good levels of independence as they confidently select their activities, use the toilet, hang up their jackets and help to tidy away at the end of the session. They form strong relationships with each other and staff as they play and learn. They are conscious of the feelings of others. For example, a new child struggling to settle was offered different toys and reassurance by concerned children, as staff worked hard to settle him. Children are enthusiastic about books, they select them independently and follow the story as they turn pages from front to back. They have the opportunity to select and take home a book each day from the wide and varied choice available. They enjoy discussing the stories that they have chosen with a staff member each day and use their exercise books to draw a picture or write a few words about the story they have read. Children listen with considerable levels of concentration to stories read at group time and happily participate in discussion, for example, as they enjoy 'The Owl Babies' story together. Resources such as crayons and pencils are regularly available to enable children to develop hand and eye coordination and to encourage early writing skills. In addition, children have daily opportunities to learn to recognise their written names, as they find them and place on the notice board to self register on arrival. Children confidently write their names, either independently or by copying or tracing pre-written words. They enjoy small group times, where inventive activities are used to focus on letter and sound recognition. Children are encouraged to use language for social interactions, as they play outside or in the home corner. They ask questions, seek help and to share their experiences. For example, as they tell the group about the exciting adventures of Clare and Barnaby Bears, who enjoy an overnight stay at each child's home. Children enthusiastically tell the group about the visit and show their account in the bears' diaries. Children extend their vocabulary as they learn about cranes and diggers, they talk about Bob's special cement recipe and think of different words to describe sand.

Children respond well to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines. They become confident with number, as they count in number rhymes, clap the number for the date and join staff to count the head of each child before and after outside play. They enjoy the repetition as staff touch each child, counting 'one to ten, then start again'. They successfully complete simple calculation and problem solving activities as they share slices of cake for the family, dividing up the paper cake and writing numbers on each section. Children learn to recognise different shapes as they complete puzzles together and make carefully planned arrangements using different objects. Regular opportunities to develop physical skills and coordination are provided for all children. They climb on apparatus, run around the large outdoor play area and practise their throwing, catching and ball skills. Children gain pencil control as they use a range of drawing and writing media, such as pens, pencils and different sized paintbrushes. Children explore their creative abilities using paint, glue, colour and texture in a variety of ways and join in drama and music sessions with great enjoyment. Children learn to differentiate between colours as they create firework pictures, using pink, purple and black and produce block paintings of black, white and grey.

Children have exciting opportunities to learn about the world around them. For example, they learn about the natural environment as they look at snails and conkers. They enjoy the presence of the two resident dogs and chickens in the nearby field. They learn about different farm vehicles as part of a transport theme, enthusiastically looking at and sitting inside a farm tractor. There are few opportunities for children to use programmable toys and equipment. Therefore

their knowledge of simple technology is limited. They enjoy different role play areas, such as the home corner and building site. Opportunities to build and design models on both a small and large scale are provided regularly and help children learn how to connect and balance, using a variety of different materials, such as construction toys, boxes and tubes.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are all warmly welcomed into the setting and are highly valued as individuals. They develop a strong sense of belonging and learn about their own and other's needs, through group work and interaction from the staff. Purposeful books and resources reflect the world and local community and give children a clear understanding about different cultures and the lives of those around us. They begin to appreciate the customs and cultures of others as they learn about different festivals and celebrations. For example, they make a dragon and dance around the room for Chinese New Year, they celebrate Divali and have plans for a Caribbean theme day. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They play very well together and clearly enjoy each other's company. They are encouraged to take turns, they show concern for each other and share resources with their friends. They use 'please' and 'thank you' readily. Staff manage children well and have high expectations for their behaviour. They provide good role models, by talking quietly to the children at all times and this is reflected in the calm atmosphere generated within the sessions. Children are therefore developing good social skills and clearly understand what is required of them.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff form good relationships with parents and ensure that they work together to meet children's individual needs. New parents receive an informative prospectus, which tells them about the staff, aims of the group and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. However, parents are not provided with any information relating to the curriculum for children under three years, so parents may not be fully aware of what younger children are doing and how they are learning. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their children, through the information provided before their children begin as well as through regular discussions with staff. Parent questionnaires have been devised and completed by parents of new children, to obtain feedback about the setting and establish how their children have settled within the first term. Staff meet with parents at individual consultations and also informally at the end of the session, to discuss children's progress and development. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children's learning, they are informed what children are doing and are encouraged to share their knowledge, skills and ideas with the group.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Recruitment and vetting procedures contribute to children being protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The majority of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and staff attend training to update and enhance their skills; they are committed to continually improving the care and education that they provide. Consequently, children's development is enhanced. Staff form a strong, efficient and well organised team who work well together and have a high regard for the well-being of all children. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities, which ensures that sessions run efficiently

and smoothly. The large space is very well organised, to allow children independence and to maximise their play opportunities. Staff re-organise some activities during the session, to stimulate and maintain children's interest and prevent boredom. Children's care, learning and play is therefore well supported.

All of the necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place and record keeping systems are used appropriately to meet children's needs. In addition, the groups policies and procedures work well in practice, to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Although a daily register is in place, children's arrival and departure times are not recorded; this means that staff may not be fully aware of the numbers of children they are accountable for in the event of an emergency. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is good. There is a good, clear leadership from the manager, who is available at every session to interact with children, support staff and meet with parents. The manager oversees the planning and regular staff meetings to allow staff the chance to identify and discuss any issues they may have, concerning the curriculum or children's learning. Children have access to appropriate play and learning opportunities, which meet their needs and help them to progress towards the early learning goals. A structured induction process is in place for new staff and all staff have regular appraisals, which help them to reflect on their practice and to assess both their own and the setting's strengths and weaknesses.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group were asked to develop the child protection policy and obtain a copy of the government document 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused'. The group were also asked to update the behaviour policy, to include information on bullying as required in the National Standards.

Written policies have been updated to include all required information and the government child protection booklet has been obtained.

### **Nursery Education**

The group were also asked to develop the planning and assessment records, to show children's next steps towards the early learning goals and to formalise strategies to support children with English as an additional language.

Planning and assessment are in the process of change and improvement. Staff are seeking further support with this. Strategies are in place should children attend with English as an additional language.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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 good.

### 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):

- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure children's arrival and attendance times are recorded accurately
- ensure that parents are kept fully informed of the curriculum for younger children.

#### 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):

- extend the opportunities for children to explore and operate simple programmable toys and equipment.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)