

# Puddleducks Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	208250
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Juliette Jennings

<b>Setting Address</b>	Puddleducks Under Fives, Lawley Community Centre, Lawley, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2PR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Puddleducks Under Fives
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care
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## 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?

Puddleducks Under Fives opened in 1994. It operates from a community centre, next to the local primary school in the village of Lawley, Telford. The setting serves the local community.

There are currently 52 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 43 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is open five days a week during school term time, except for Wednesday afternoons when the setting supports a parent and toddler group. Sessions are from 09:00 till 14:45 except for Wednesdays when the session finishes at 12:45, after the lunch-club facility.

There are six members of staff working with the children, of whom five hold recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because staff follow the specific policies in place to support good hygiene. Areas used to prepare snacks are very clean and well-maintained. Children can independently wash their hands as they wish and are encouraged to develop their understanding of good hygiene through routine activities. In addition, children enjoy playing with clean resources in a well-maintained environment because staff complete regular safety and cleanliness checks on all toys and equipment. Procedures to further supplement this aspect are in place and fully implemented, for example, accident records are completed promptly, medication records are in line with requirements and written permission is obtained from parents so that staff can act quickly if there is a medical emergency or an accident. Furthermore, most staff are trained in first aid techniques and the first aid equipment is readily available and checked regularly.

Children are encouraged to eat healthily because staff have introduced positive ways of reinforcing healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle, with both parents and children. For example, a certificate reward system works well in encouraging children to want to eat healthily and information leaflets and photographs encourage parents to think about what they provide for their children to eat in packed lunches. They thoroughly enjoy snacks of carrot sticks, breadsticks and a variety of dips, asking for seconds and sometimes thirds. In addition, they are supported to independently pour their own drinks from a choice of juice or milk.

Children have very good opportunities for physical activity, fresh air and light. Staff make very good use of the outdoor space as a learning environment, with children being able to freely access the outdoor area as they wish within the routine of the session. This allows them to take their learning outside and gives them good opportunities to enjoy the fresh air and outdoor space.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy access to a comfortable, stimulating and exciting environment, where staff work hard to ensure it is interesting and motivating on a daily basis. Plenty of toys, resources and equipment is available to children on a daily basis which is in good condition and supports their learning. For example, the computer is located on an appropriately sized trolley so that children can access it without any struggle to reach it. The environment is colourful and interesting, with colourful displays available where possible, with staff using innovative ways of showing children's work and ensuring that the space is child-orientated. The setting and routine is organised well to meet children's needs. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities on offer and this helps to ensure that the children are focused and behave well.

Children's safety is ensured because staff are vigilant in their implementation of specific procedures. This includes ensuring that all areas are safe and ensuring that children cannot access areas where they are not supposed to be. Supervision of children is consistently good and staff engage with them so that they remain interested and busy in the play space. Children's safety is further ensured because evacuation procedures are practiced regularly so that they would know what to do in an emergency. However, the fire evacuation procedure does not highlight a place of safety so that children remain be secure if they could not return to the

setting. In addition, the lost child policy does not contain a timescale for a search or an outline of the area to be searched, so children's safety in this event is potentially compromised.

Children's welfare is ensured and promoted because staff have a good knowledge base of child protection issues and know what to do if they have concerns about any children. There are detailed procedures available to all staff which clearly outline what should be done if there is a concern about any child. In addition, training is accessed regularly to ensure that there is a sound awareness of current safeguarding children procedures.

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

The provision is good.

Children aged under three years are contented and happy, enjoying the opportunities for child-initiated free play time which staff ensure is available during the sessions that are specifically focused on the younger age group. This gives them the opportunity to explore and investigate at their own individual level and at their own pace. They enjoy construction activities, sand and water play, painting and role play and are particularly interested in the outdoor activities, for example, moving the streamers about in the wind or dangling them over the edge of the climbing frame, attempting to hit the plastic balls with bats or simply running about in the space. Children of this age group are supported very well within the setting, with staff sensitive to their need for more child-initiated time and shorter adult-led times. Planning reflects the needs of children in this age group and children are busily engaged with age-appropriate activities which engage them and that they find interesting. Assessment uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to track children's individual learning and helps staff to plan for the next steps in development.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have lovely support and interaction from staff, who are very obviously committed to providing a safe, secure and caring learning environment where children are enabled to make good progress in all areas of development. The well planned routine and exciting, stimulating and interesting environment allows children to become involved and focused on their chosen activities and gives them time to extend and reinforce their learning. For example, a nature walk is followed by caterpillar model making, table top displays about mini-beasts are readily available, water and sand play is on offer, small-world mini-beasts with laminated picture cards are set out and outside time is used effectively so that children can continue to search for mini-beasts in the familiar space.

Children are keen and interested to learn, engaging positively with staff and other children and obviously enjoy their time at the setting. There is plenty of laughter and an inquisitiveness about the children which shows that they are happy, settled and contented in the learning space, thus enabling them to make good progress through the learning goals. The use of the outdoor area is particularly good and supports the children well in their learning and exploration. They have very good opportunities to learn in the outdoor environment and subsequently access plenty of fresh air and light. Good use is made of the natural world around them when they take a nature walk to the pond area to search for insects. Children show enthusiasm, delight and surprise when they notice a spider scurrying under a piece of wood or ants busying

themselves on a small log. They use magnifying glasses to look more closely and observe the size and detail of the insects.

Children aged three and four years of age recall when looking at the water play photograph card that the sand goes mushy when water is added to it. Name recognition is supported because children place their photograph by their name card whilst they choose favourite activities. They comment on the pattern on the shell of a snail they have found in the garden, say it must be asleep, notice the slime underneath it and excitedly move off to try and find more. Children scrunch the newspaper up and squeeze it into the material to make a caterpillar, making a decision about how long it will be and being helped to tie a knot in the end of it. They explore technology as they point the camera and press the button or spend some time navigating the remote control caterpillar around the space, making it turn around corners and go backwards and forwards.

Assessments are detailed and track children's development through the stepping stones. Staff are diligent in making detailed observations on their key-children and these inform overall assessment records, which are then translated into areas for improvement and fed back into future planning. Staff are very good at knowing what the children need to do next and know that they learn best through valuable experiences and time for child-led play, thus reinforcing and extending their learning. However, the opportunities in spontaneous activities for calculation and concepts of more than, less than and the same are sometimes limited, as are opportunities for children to link sounds with letters.

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

The provision is good.

Children's understanding of diversity is promoted appropriately through themed activities and access to resources such as books, dolls and small world people and posters. They learn about the world around them through themework and exploration of their local environment, for example, when they explore the pond area for mini-beasts. Children's individual needs are accommodated well and supported appropriately within the daily routine of the setting. They have good opportunities to make choices and become independent, with good encouragement from staff to enable this independence to develop. Procedures are in place in order to allow the setting to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Children are busy, occupied, keen and interested to learn. They motivate themselves and enjoy the wide range of activities which are accessed in free play or made available by imaginative, supportive and enthusiastic staff. Behaviour is consistently good, with children developing positive relationships with other children and staff, who use appropriate techniques to foster positive behaviour. Children are constantly praised and their efforts are acknowledged, for example through discussion, photographs and displays of their own work. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Regular information is available in the form of newsletters, notices, photographs and good daily contact. A detailed prospectus is given to all parents which outlines the childcare and education provision effectively. Regular meetings ensure that parents can be informed of their child's progress and development, through the child's key worker. The activities that children participate in are relayed by way of a link book which goes home every day. The setting seeks to include parents wherever they can, for example, in encouraging them to review what they provide in lunch boxes so that children can begin to eat a healthier, balanced diet.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Children benefit from a committed staff and committee who have a clear understanding about the service their setting provides and have a sound overview of what can be done to further meet the needs of the children. Children are comfortable within a secure environment and benefit from a stable staff group who obviously enjoy caring for children and ensuring that they have a strong learning environment to nurture their ongoing development.

Systems are in place to ensure that staff are aware of current good practice guidelines and can develop and extend their experience, for example, through training, access to childcare publications and regular team meetings to discuss any issues. An example of this has been access to training for the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has been implemented successfully, with a positive impact on the children. Staff appraisals and a clear management structure all help to ensure that staff remain committed to providing an exciting, happy and comfortable environment for the children in their care. Staff work well together as a team and this supports an interesting, relaxed and caring environment for children.

Most staff working with children have appropriate childcare qualifications and all have a commitment to accessing ongoing training. Good child to staff ratios mean that children have good individual attention where required and this helps them to develop well. Sound procedures are in place for ensuring that children are cared for by staff who have had appropriate experience, enjoy working with children and have completed appropriate checks, although written references are not always requested and this potentially places children at risk.

Documentation, policies and procedures are organised very well and are clearly working documents. Regular review of procedures ensures that these documents work in practice, with involvement from all staff so that they are clear about what is expected. Other records relating directly to children are stored confidentially and in line with requirements. Overall the range of children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection, the setting was asked to address a small number of recommendations in order to improve the safety for children. These issues have all been addressed satisfactorily so that children's safety can be ensured if procedures are followed correctly.

At the previous education inspection, the setting was asked to ensure that observations were made on all children. This has been implemented so that children's development can be monitored effectively. In addition, the setting was asked to provide more opportunities for children to recognise their name and familiar words and to count, recognise numbers and solve problems. Whilst most of this final aspect has been addressed so that children are making good progress in these areas, there is still some improvement to be made in ensuring that children develop concepts of calculation and can begin to link sounds and letters, particularly within spontaneous activities.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

In November 2006 Ofsted received a concern relating to National Standard 13 (Child Protection).

Following investigations by other agencies, Ofsted investigated these concerns by carrying out an unannounced visit on the 17 January 2007 to ascertain if the setting was meeting the National Standards.

The provider was found to be meeting National Standard 13 (Child Protection) but was found to be in breach of National Standard 12 (Working in partnership with parents and carers) and an action was set in relation to ensuring that all complaints are recorded in the complaints record and that they are available for the parent on request. A satisfactory response was received to the actions set. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure that a robust recruitment procedures is in place, specifically in relation to obtaining written references
- include details of the area to be searched by staff in the lost child procedure and detail a place of safety in the evacuation procedure.

#### **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):

- further develop the opportunities in spontaneous and child-initiated learning to increase children's skills in calculation and linking sounds and letters.

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)