

Puddleduck Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY346123

Inspection date 21 April 2008

Inspector Kelly Eyre

Setting Address Puddleduck Nursery School, Woodlands Park, Bedford Road, Clapham, Bedfordshire, MK41 6EJ

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Registered person Rosedale Nursery 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 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 Nursery School is owned by Rosedale Nursery Ltd. It originally opened in 1996 and was re-registered by the current owners in 2007. It operates from three separate buildings on a site in Clapham, on the outskirts of Bedford. A maximum of 71 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 140 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for early education. The setting serves children from a wide catchment area. It currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because attention has been paid to details, for example, there are clear policies providing guidance about the exclusion of children who are unwell. There are good daily hygiene practices in place which prevent the spread of infection, for example, staff wear appropriate protective clothing when changing nappies and children wash their hands before snack and meal times. Children's understanding of the relevance of these practices is promoted because they are given explanations by staff to reinforce their learning. Children's health in an emergency situation is well promoted because eight members of staff have attended appropriate first aid training.

Children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are well documented and observed. They are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and meals. These are prepared daily on the premises, with menus displayed for parents to see. These demonstrate that children are offered a balanced range of fresh ingredients and all food types and avoid foods high in sugar and salt, promoting children's growth and development. Snack and meal times are viewed as social events and also as additional learning opportunities, with children sitting together and using the time to discuss current events. They help with some tasks, such as laying the table and scraping their plates. However, their independence is not fully promoted as they do not help with tasks, such as serving their food and drinks.

Children enjoy a variety of physical activities and regular opportunities for fresh air, contributing to the promotion of their good health. They develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills and co-ordination as they participate in structured activities, such as physical exercise sessions, action rhymes and dance sessions. They regularly use the outdoor play areas where they enjoy activities, such as climbing, balancing, using ride-on toys, sliding, running, digging in the sand and throwing and catching bean bags. Their participation in a range of activities ensures that they are offered good opportunities to develop finer physical skills and hand-eye co-ordination. For example, children playing with clay use tools, such as scissors, rollers and cutters.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's ongoing safety is given a high priority and staff take positive steps to promote this and prevent accidents. There are practical procedures in place covering most areas of work, for example, all areas are checked daily before children arrive and there are clear procedures regarding emergency evacuation. However, older children's safety is affected because they are able to access hazardous items stored in the staff toilet and connecting lobby area. Children are developing a good understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. They are given clear explanations by staff so that they understand the importance of safety practices, such as the safe use of scissors and why it is important to take turns on equipment like the slide.

Children's safety and comfort is further promoted by the provision of equipment which is always appropriate for the age group using it, for example, there are correctly sized tables and chairs for each age group. Children are able to select toys and activities independently from a wide range of good quality resources. The majority of resources are well organised and storage

containers are labelled with words and pictures to enable children to make informed choices. Children's welfare is well promoted because staff have attended additional training and have a thorough understanding of procedures relating to safeguarding children. They are therefore able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children separate well from their parents and carers as they come into the setting and are happy, secure and settled. Their daily experiences at the nursery are enhanced by staff who are kind and caring and are committed to providing a stimulating learning environment for each child. This is reflected in the thoughtful and thorough activity planning which ensures that all children are offered a wide range of play opportunities and experiences. Their individual development is consistently promoted because staff use comprehensive methods to assess them, transferring this information directly to the planning process.

Children feel welcome and valued because staff show them that they genuinely appreciate their company, joining in with their play and conversations and taking time to get to know each child. This creates a positive, caring environment where children receive consistent care and appropriate support. Children are able to determine their own play and are well-supported in this. For example, a small group of children choose pictures they would like to cut out and are supported by staff members in learning how to use the scissors correctly and safely.

Babies and young children settle well and have secure relationships with staff. Good staff deployment ensures that although children have key workers, staff work in all areas of the setting and so know each child's requirements and routines. Staff work closely with parents to make sure that they are aware of all routines, keeping to these as much as possible. Children are gently encouraged to take the next developmental steps by staff who have a good understanding of child development and also know each child well. For example, babies and young children laugh and show their obvious enjoyment as they are encouraged to walk around the garden or to balance on ride-on toys.

Children's daily play is extended because staff continuously observe them and intervene appropriately to promote additional experiences. For example, a staff member notes that babies are enjoying listening to music and so provides additional musical instruments: the children thoroughly enjoy exploring the various sounds and attempting to play or clap in time with the music. Children's overall development is further promoted because staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, utilising this in all activity planning and assessments.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of learning and their development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Children make balanced progress because staff carry out frequent assessments and observations, actively using the information from these to compile monthly reviews of each child's progress and to inform future planning. All assessments are carefully cross-referenced to the Foundation Stage and children's progress through this is monitored.

Children's confidence is promoted and they become secure in participating in activities and exploring their environment because they are offered a wide range of familiar activities. These

include imaginative play, reading and a variety of crafts and construction. Their knowledge is then further extended as they participate in a range of themed topics, offering them opportunities to look more closely at subjects, such as 'Spring and Easter', 'The Weather', 'Festivals', 'The Senses' and 'Around the World'.

The careful planning and thoughtful provision of an interesting range of resources ensure that children are offered good opportunities to develop the attitudes and behaviours that enable them to achieve in their learning. For example, they are motivated to learn through exciting and interesting activities and are gaining a clear understanding of right and wrong. Their confidence and self-esteem are reinforced, giving them the confidence to explore and question. Children interact well with others and competently use language to organise and explain their thoughts and activities. For example, children playing a card-matching game explain the rules to each other and organise turn-taking. Children show a keen interest in books and enjoy both individual and group stories, joining in enthusiastically and attempting to predict endings and outcomes. Children are able to identify letters and understand that writing can be used as a means of recording and communication, writing shopping lists during role play and putting their names on completed work.

Children are beginning to use numbers in a meaningful context and understand that numbers represent sets of objects. They are able to sort, count and categorise objects, for example, sorting fruit and vegetables according to size and type. They are gaining a good understanding of mathematical and positional concepts, for example, making height charts and discussing smallest, bigger and biggest. However, they are not consistently encouraged to incorporate their knowledge and problem-solving skills into their daily play and therefore their understanding in this area is not fully promoted. Children have opportunities to observe, explore and question in a wide range of activities that form the foundation of their later learning in subjects, such as history, geography and science. Staff encourage them to explore and experiment. For example, children playing with water are encouraged to compare the speed at which the water empties from different containers: they laugh and giggle as they 'race' each other and then discuss the reason for the different speeds.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that develop their confidence and skills, for example, they enjoy using the outdoor play area where they climb, balance, run, slide and dig. They are developing a positive attitude and understanding of healthy eating through regular discussions and the provision of healthy meals and snacks on a daily basis. Children enjoy numerous opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form. For example, they make collages, use a range of painting techniques and build with a variety of construction sets. Children are encouraged to express themselves through their artwork and their finished work is truly appreciated, as demonstrated by the wealth of colourful displays around the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a positive self-image because they are respected as individuals and their contributions are valued. This area is further enhanced because staff praise children's efforts and achievements, thus promoting their confidence and self-esteem. Children are encouraged to express their views and to value the views and opinions of others. For example, during group story time, children are all offered an equal opportunity to discuss the various illustrations and predict what will happen next.

Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their individual requirements recognised and consistently met. Staff are experienced and work consistently and sensitively with children and parents. The co-ordinator for this area maintains very good contact with other professionals and ensures that each child receives appropriate support. Children have comprehensive individual plans which set realistic and achievable goals. These are reviewed on a regular basis, ensuring the balanced promotion of their development. The good levels of staff support and interaction ensure that children are able to participate meaningfully in all activities and the daily routines of the setting.

Children are gaining a good awareness of other cultures and ways of life through discussions and daily access to a range of resources which promote positive images. Their understanding is further enhanced through their meaningful participation in a range of activities. For example, when celebrating Diwali, children made diva lamps, dressed up in traditional clothes, made Diwali cards and Rangoli patterns, and tasted traditional sweets. Children's behaviour is good and they competently organise turn-taking and sharing. They are gaining a good understanding about taking responsibility for their own actions because staff offer them clear explanations, enabling them to understand their behaviour and make decisions about this. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents participate in an induction session and are given practical information about the setting's policies and practice, ensuring that they are aware of daily procedures and routines. Good use is made of newsletters and notice boards to ensure that parents receive up-to-date information about activities and events. This area is further supported by the provision of information sheets which detail current topics and provide information about continuing these at home. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through comprehensive daily discussions with staff, parents' evenings and access to their child's assessment files. Their views are actively sought through the use of questionnaires which staff then collate to provide information to inform action plans for the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. Their daily activities and play opportunities are enhanced by the good organisation of space within the setting. The well-organised designated base areas for the different age groups ensure that children are offered appropriate care and activities and are able to move around safely and independently. The good daily deployment of staff means that staff skills are used to enhance children's play and also that staff know each of the children and are aware of their needs and daily routines.

Children benefit from the care provided by qualified, well-supervised staff who attend further training in order to keep up-to-date with legislation and practice and consequently provide appropriate care for each child. Children's ongoing welfare and safety are promoted because there are robust procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. This is further supported by a clear procedure regarding the placement of students. A thorough staff induction process, regular supervision and daily monitoring of the setting ensure that policies and procedures are understood by all and are implemented consistently throughout the setting. All paperwork and records are organised so that they are easily accessible but are stored confidentially. This ensures that children's needs are documented and staff are able to work appropriately to promote their welfare and safety.

Leadership and management is good. Children's overall development and welfare are promoted because the nursery owner, manager and senior staff have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed and revised to ensure that good practice is reflected and regulations are consistently met. Staff are well-supported on a daily basis and in achieving further qualifications. There is a positive attitude to obtaining feedback and using this to further improve the quality of care offered. The nursery owner and manager act as good role models, demonstrating their genuine enthusiasm and a commitment to provide high quality childcare. This creates a positive environment, where children are highly valued and are able to play and learn confidently.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- continue to develop daily procedures to further promote children's independence
- ensure that children are not able to access hazardous items stored in the staff toilet and connected entrance lobby.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to use problem-solving skills on a daily basis.

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