

Puddleduck Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY346123
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Inspector Kelly Eyre

Setting address Puddleduck Nursery School, Woodlands Park, Bedford Road, Clapham, Bedfordshire, MK41 6EJ
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Puddleduck 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. Slopes to most entrances mean that the premises are accessible. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play areas.

The setting receives funding for early education. It is open each weekday throughout the year and sessions are from 08.00 to 18.00. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register to provide 71 places and there are currently 74 children attending who are within this age group. The setting serves a wide catchment area. A small number of children attend other settings such as local pre-schools.

The setting is also registered to offer care to children aged over five years. This provision is registered by Ofsted on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Children occupying these places share the same facilities as the children in the early years age range and have the option of using additional dedicated rooms and outdoor play areas. There are currently no children on roll in this age range.

There are 12 staff members. Of these, nine hold relevant childcare qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. The flexible approach to planning and good procedures to feed children's individual developmental needs into this are particular strengths. This means that children are consistently offered appropriate opportunities that promote their development. Staff's excellent partnerships with parents and carers and their good knowledge of each child ensure that they can promote all aspects of children's welfare and learning and make sure that they are included in all activities. The positive approach to self-evaluation means that the setting has a realistic picture of its strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to develop action plans and implement changes, thereby providing a service which is responsive to children's needs.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further opportunities for children to use mark-making and writing for a purpose and to express themselves in their art and creative activities
- review the organisation of snack and meal times to provide further opportunities to promote children's independence.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has thorough procedures for the continuous evaluation of their practice. They have a positive approach to this and actively seek feedback to inform the review of their work. The owner, manager and staff develop clear plans for the future, to lead to the potential to improve outcomes for children. For example, recent changes include the improvement of planning and assessment procedures to ensure that children's needs are efficiently fed into the daily planning.

The enthusiasm and commitment of staff creates a positive atmosphere, enhancing children's daily care and experiences. The implementation of policies supports the efficient running of the setting, ensuring that children are cared for in a safe, secure environment. Rigorous checks ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Thorough risk assessments are carried out, meaning that children are able to move safely between their activities. Comprehensive procedures for safeguarding children ensure that their welfare is promoted. Good daily practice means that children's health is promoted. For example, they are consistently offered nutritious meals and snacks. However, the organisation of these times means that children's independence is not fully promoted.

The setting works exceptionally well with parents and carers, supporting the thorough exchange of information in order to provide consistent care and promote children's learning and development. Regular newsletters, written reports and daily updates ensure that parents are given excellent information and feedback about their child's progress and activities. The innovative use of 'Activities at Home' sheets means that parents are offered information about the Early Years Foundation Stage, how children learn through play and the setting's current topics, with imaginative ideas for additional activities to do at home.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are offered a wide range of activities that support them in making good progress in all areas of learning. This is underpinned by thorough procedures for assessing their ongoing progress and feeding their individual needs into the planning. The practical daily monitoring procedures ensure that there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, thereby promoting children's independence and encouraging them to become active in their own learning. However, these opportunities are not consistently optimised as children are not always encouraged to express themselves in their creative activities or to explore the purpose of mark-making and writing.

Staff's flexible approach enables children to choose their play and ensures that they are offered appropriate support in this. For example, young children choose a favourite book and settle down to read this with a staff member, happily interacting as they count the ducks and name the characters. This good staff support and the provision of resources that interest children further support their development. For example, young children become engaged in exploring heuristic

play materials, demonstrating their pleasure as they discover items such as wooden spoons and rings, feathers, brushes and sponges.

The good settling-in procedures mean that children's emotional development is promoted and they develop secure relationships with staff. There are comprehensive procedures for gathering information about children's routines and preferences. This is used to inform daily planning and is readily available to all staff working with the children. Children feel valued and their development is further promoted because staff join in with their play. For example, a staff member joins children engaged in an 'office' role play scenario, gently suggesting additional resources such as calculators and office diaries. The realistic presentation of activities and resources supports children's development. For example, they are gaining a good awareness of other ways of life as they explore books in dual languages, access resources such as maps and artefacts from other countries, make their own books to illustrate festivals and use coloured construction sets to make flags of the world.

Children are encouraged to be active learners and appreciate the environment. Older children grow carrots, tomatoes and peas in their own garden. They enjoy tending these and make a photographic record of their progress, noting the first signs of growth and what the plants need to survive. Children are encouraged to use their senses. For example, they make scented play dough, explore ice, make fruit salad and use headphones to listen to music and stories. Children are encouraged to solve simple problems. They discuss the difference in their ages, act out number rhymes, weigh cooking ingredients and compare the sizes of their hands and feet. They are gaining a good understanding of the relevance of healthy lifestyles and practices. For example, they wash their hands and face after meals and talk with staff about the relevance of this.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met