

Ducklings Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY285200
Inspection date 13/01/2009
Inspector Sarah Fletcher

Setting address Wimborne Crescent, Westcroft, Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire, MK4 4DB

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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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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).

Description of the setting

Ducklings Pre-School is one of several pre-schools run by Ducklings Limited. It was originally registered in 1996 and re-registered under new management in 2002. It operates from the community hall in Westcroft, close to Milton Keynes. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 40 children from two to under eight years and they have use of several rooms and a fully enclosed outside play area. The group is open during term time, Monday to Friday 09.15 to 14.30. The staff are currently caring for 82 children in the early years age group, who attend for a variety of sessions throughout the week. The group supports children attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas on a sessional basis, with the group offering a lunch club for those families requiring this service. The pre-school employs nine staff. Of these, six staff, including the manager, have appropriate early years qualifications of level three and above, while three staff are working towards a level two qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children's needs are routinely met successfully, as staff get to know all children well, ensuring they are comfortable in the calm relaxing surroundings and are beginning to understand clearly established pre-school routines. Children are mostly safeguarded and the pre-school staff are committed to improving the quality of care and learning for all children, showing positive motivation to continue the process. Staff ensure they are familiar with children's preferences through an effective key person system, offering good levels of support to help each child feel unique, regardless of their cultural background. Children benefit from the effective two-way communication system established between staff and parents, which provides good quality information, daily discussion and support to families, enabling the group to promote outcomes for children successfully.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage where children also attend
- improve the range of resources to promote diversity and positive images of other cultures and abilities
- further develop risk assessments to include all areas with potential hazards to children, indoors and outside

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The pre-school manager and her strong team of staff safeguard children effectively by implementing appropriate vetting procedures to ensure adults working with

children are suitable, with most staff appropriately qualified. Staff have clear knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and a good awareness of the importance of recording any concerns. Secure and effective entry systems are in place to prevent unvetted adults entering the premises without supervision, with visitors signing in and out. Risk assessments are routinely carried out on many resources children use on a daily basis, however not all areas of potential risk are currently assessed to reduce potential day-to-day hazards for children at play.

Parents and carers are very supportive of the group and are happy with both the care given and the information they receive about their child's care, learning and development. Open communications between staff and parents through both verbal discussion and written communication ensures children's individual needs are well met. The pre-school provides periodic questionnaires for parents to help improve practice through feedback, together with half termly newsletters and bright informative noticeboards. Policies and procedures contain clear details of pre-school practice and are shared appropriately with both parents and staff. Documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place to successfully promote outcomes for children. The pre-school is beginning to use self-assessment and is developing an effective system to analyse practice. Records for individual children are well maintained and permissions from parents are obtained routinely.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children's learning and development is well supported across the pre-school, with a wide range of age appropriate toys, resources and equipment available to aid progress towards the early learning goals. For example, children freely choose from a variety of construction, textured materials and different types of puzzles. Imaginative and physical play equipment, together with resources for problem solving and numeracy are easily accessible each day, however, resources to promote diversity and positive images of other cultures and abilities are currently limited. Staff offer high levels of interaction with children as they play naturally or take part in focussed activities, talking about everyday things to develop their individual language skills and reinforce their individual knowledge.

Children benefit from both free play and structured activities in a planned and purposeful environment, indoors and outside. They are clearly aware of simple hygiene routines as staff encourage them to use anti bacterial gel to clean their hands before eating and provide appropriate facilities for hand washing after toileting to avoid cross infection. Staff follow clear guidance regarding children's sickness or any allergies and encourage children's independent use of tissues for runny noses. Children handle books independently and enjoy opportunities to make marks freely or under adult guidance, with a variety of resources of their choice. Focus activities, such as icing small cakes or making cut out mosaics encourage children's dexterity, while they learn about shape, number and colour and develop their concentration levels.

Observation and assessment of children's individual learning and development is

actively recorded and shared with parents. Flexible planning and careful evaluation of activities helps the child's key person to assess progress and plan their next steps for individual learning. Children's learning files are shared with parents regularly and feedback is welcomed on children's activities outside the pre-school. Parental involvement in the children's learning is actively encouraged through a home reading scheme, which is monitored by the child's key person, with parental comments invited. Although the pre-school provides all children with the Early Years Foundation Stage successfully, staff have yet to establish links with other providers of the framework where pre-school children attend.

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?	2
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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have 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.