

Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery is one of two privately owned nurseries run by Dizzy Ducks Day Nursery Limited. It opened in 2007 and operates from seven rooms within a purpose built demountable building in the grounds of Mayflower High School in Billericay. The building is easily accessible to all users and all children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 67 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens on five weekdays from 07:00 until 19:00 all year round, with the exception of Bank Holidays. There are currently 110 children from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as a second language.

There are 25 staff, of whom 23, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two are working towards early years qualifications. Three are working towards Level 3 qualifications and 15 have Level 3 qualifications. Five are training towards a Foundation Degree. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Essex Day Nursery Association (EDNA). It also benefits from the involvement of an early years teacher at the Billericay cluster group meetings. It was awarded the Essex Healthy Life Healthy Eating Gold Award in December 2008.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The quality of the provision is outstanding. Good induction procedures and excellent partnerships with parents enable staff to get to know the children very well, ensure that all are included effectively and settle quickly, and meet their individual needs successfully. Staff create a very safe, welcoming and nurturing environment for children and their families, as a result of which children are very happy and can flourish. The nursery promotes all aspects of children's welfare, learning and development very well through very close teamwork, excellent staff deployment, small group sizes and very effective use of resources, including links with outside agencies. The senior managers have very good systems in place to ensure that staff at all levels participate actively in self-review to continuously improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- refining the recording of daily observations of individual children to further improve the planning of activities for the unique child

- presenting an easily accessible picture of each child's progress for the benefit of parents, managers and other interested parties who may not have the key person's intimate knowledge of the child's development.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The structure of the leadership, coupled with a culture of continuous professional development, consultation at all levels, experimentation, reflection and feedback, ensures that the nursery can evaluate its practice very effectively. Responsibilities are well defined and distributed evenly across several managerial roles, which helps the setting collate all the information it needs to take prompt action that leads to rapid improvement. The nursery has made excellent progress in a short time since the last inspection and has addressed the previous recommendations.

In particular, it has considerably improved its systems to ensure the welfare and safety of children and this aspect of the provision is now outstanding. For example, potential risks are assessed daily throughout the setting and a monthly audit of accidents and incidents informs the managers as to how the practice can be further improved. There are robust recruitment procedures in place to check the suitability of staff to work with children. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and of their responsibilities to safeguard children in all circumstances. They implement the relevant policies and procedures rigorously. Arrangements to ensure that children's medical needs are met are robust and nearly all staff have full paediatric first aid training. The senior managers update all policies annually and have recently reviewed and updated the operational plan to ensure it explains effectively how the setting runs.

The nursery practises an open door policy and parents feel welcome at any time. They receive a wealth of information through daily chats, the parents' information board, monthly newsletters, termly consultations to review their children's progress and open days. Parents particularly value the quality of information contained in the daily information sheets they receive and in their child's 'development books' which give them an interesting picture of their child's development through observation notes, photographic evidence and samples of the child's work. They also receive three detailed progress reports every year. As their views are sought frequently, they continually contribute to the improvement of various aspects of the provision. For example, they have recently requested that the daily sheets include information about what their child ate that day. Parents also enjoy attending such events as the Christmas concert and the Easter egg hunt when they can support the children, the nursery and join in the fun. Parents speak very highly of the level of day-to-day care which staff provide for all children. For example, one mother said how grateful she was for the advice and support given by the staff to help her better manage her child's behaviour at home. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language are fully included in activities through very close partnerships with parents and the expert support of outside agencies and the member of staff who coordinates this area.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The quality of planning and assessment has improved since the last inspection. Key persons record what activities each child has chosen on a daily basis and the extent to which the child has achieved the expected goals. This information is used effectively to plan suitable learning experiences that day or the next to move the child's learning on. The focus activity plans clearly indicate each child's next learning steps. The nursery has accurately identified that the recording of daily observations of individual children can be further improved and it has recently developed a useful format for this purpose. Although there are good assessment systems in place, the recording methods do not include a summary that tracks each child's progress in an easily accessible visual form. This prevents parents, managers and other interested parties, who do not necessarily have the key person's intimate knowledge of the child's development, from forming an immediate picture of the child's progress.

Children highly enjoy their play in a safe, secure and stimulating environment because their interests are taken into account when staff prepare the learning environment and plan learning intentions. Consequently, children have plenty of opportunities to initiate their own play, balanced with an appropriate proportion of adult-led activities. Furthermore, children always have a choice between quiet and more noisy or vigorous activities to suit their moods. The thematic approach follows the children's feedback and personalised activities are provided to suit children's learning styles, as was the case with one of the older children who was particularly responsive to computer learning. The indoor and outdoor areas are used very effectively to provide children across the age range with experiences in the six areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Pre-school children benefit from frequent one-to-one sessions with two members of staff specifically dedicated to reinforcing and assessing their development in language and numeracy skills. Parents rightly value this feature of the provision and report that it helps their child progress at a more rapid rate, particularly in their vocabulary and communication skills. In addition, the implementation of a language programme, that uses signs and symbols, successfully supports all children in their communication, language and literacy skills. The teaching of reading skills is led by two 'learning coordinators' whose expertise ensures consistency in children's learning across the curriculum. The wide-range of multi-sensory resources contributes highly to extending all aspects of a child's development through practical experiences.

Children gain a very good understanding of how to be healthy because they are encouraged to eat fruit, have free access to water, have plenty of physical exercise indoors and outdoors and have practical experiences that help them make healthy choices. They thoroughly enjoy the nutritious meals prepared by the cook. Since February 2009, they have been working an allotment plot with enthusiasm and look forward to being able to cook the fresh vegetables they grow. Snack and lunch times are happy social occasions when children enjoy each other's company and that of adults. They are encouraged to develop good manners, communication skills and healthy eating habits. Children understand why they have to wash their hands after messy play or using the toilet, before eating and why they should use

antiseptic gel.

Children demonstrate that they know how to keep themselves and others safe. They obey the rules readily and treat the environment with respect and consideration to others. Their behaviour is outstanding because they are extremely well managed and supported by very caring staff who know them very well, are alert to their individual needs and help them develop self-discipline. Babies, toddlers and older children all respond extremely well to the calming influence of the nurturing ethos. They smile readily, look content and feel confident enough to talk or listen to visitors. This in turn contributes highly to promoting a strong sense of security and emotional well-being throughout the setting.

Through a very wide range of opportunities, children develop high levels of independence, autonomy and a good sense of responsibility. They contribute to shaping their learning by expressing their preferences and new interests. They enjoy the responsibilities attached to being 'special helpers.' They contribute to developing the herb garden and growing vegetables. They routinely help with the organisation of snack times, for example, by pouring water for themselves and others. They develop a strong sense of identity and share their diverse cultural experiences willingly in the confidence that they will be respected and valued.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

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

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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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