

Little Ducks Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

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Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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Description of the setting

Little Ducks Pre-School opened in 2009. The setting operates from the main hall and a smaller room of the Scout Headquarters. It is situated within walking distance of schools and shops in Hutton, Essex. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times only. Session times are from 9.15am to 12.15 pm and a lunch club operates on Tuesday and Thursday from 12.15 pm to 13.15 pm.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to four years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local community and wider areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special educational needs.

This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register

The pre-school employs eight staff, of whom seven of the staff, including the managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from both the local authority and the Pre School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children in the early years age range are making satisfactory progress in all areas of their development as staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and childhood development. Systems are generally in place to ensure the organisation of the session mostly meets the needs of the children attending. There is a strong focus on ensuring children feel safe and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Good working partnerships with parents and others have been successfully established, to promote continuity of care for children. Self-evaluation systems are in place and are helping the provision to understand the effectiveness of the early years setting and provide some basis for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the environment and equipment to provide purposeful free-flow play and opportunities for children to self-select resources
- use information from observation and assessment to plan the next steps in children's individual developmental progress and regularly review this approach
- use routine activities as learning opportunities to challenge and extend children's learning to enable them to make good progress towards the early

learning goals.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All the required documentation is in place and is successfully planned to promote the effective organisation of the pre-school. Current written policies and procedures reflect staff's practice in safeguarding children and promoting their well-being. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, regularly reviewed, carefully managed, and understood by those who work with the children. Staff supervise children closely to ensure their safety, and the indoor and outdoor environment is subject to thorough risk assessments to ensure risks to children are minimised. Staff are vigilant in supervising children around the garden steps, ensuring children can safely negotiate the steps as they go to and from the garden area.

The managers and staff are motivated to seek further improvement, and generally implement plans aimed at improving areas of weakness. A reasonable range of teaching methods are used and the deployment of resources, including staff, adequately support children's play and learning. However, children are unable to self-select resources and the organisation of routines and activities on occasions limits children's opportunities for purposeful free-flow activities. Therefore, children's play experiences are not consistently tailored to meet their individual needs. The pre-school adequately promotes equality and diversity, as there is a range of resources and there are planned events and celebrations organised for the children. Adaptations are made to the environment, resources and play equipment to ensure that the provision meets the needs of those children who require additional support. Management have completed the Ofsted self-evaluation form and used this to identify some areas for further improvements, this includes, extending the range of outdoor activities and increasing the opportunities for mark-making.

Good working partnerships with both parents, carers and agencies have been established, as all staff endeavour to support both children and families. Parents are fully informed about their children's achievements, progress and well-being. Good systems are in place for the successful exchange of information on arrival and collection. Good quality newsletters and notices on the display boards keep parents updated with pre-school information. Formal arrangements are in place for parents to view their children's assessment records, enabling them to see an improvement in their children's learning and development, and parents are able to comment on their child's progress. Parents are keen to express their views about the pre-school, their comments include the security of the setting, the professionalism and friendliness of the staff, and the fact that staff listen to parents views and children enjoy their time at the pre-school.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff have a sound knowledge of the EYFS and generally reflect the principles of the framework in their practice. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points. The provision takes account of some individual children's interests and abilities to provide a balance of child-led and adult-initiated activities. However, the organisation of routines and activities is not always consistently and effectively planned to meet children's differing abilities, and provide suitable challenge to enable them to make good progress towards the early learning goals. At times staff modify or provide additional materials so that children can participate at their own level and ability, although this is not consistent, particularly for certain groups of children, for example, the younger and older children are not always effectively engaged or challenged. Whilst generally, behaviour is good this lack of challenge leads to occasions when it is less so. Most children are broadly content, settled and willing to take part in activities. They make some choices about activities that they engage in and, on occasion, share responsibility for decisions.

Planning and assessments arrangements are in place, this includes continuous and weekly planning and, incorporates broad topic plans. There are examples, when children's ideas are included in planning and these themes work very well in capturing and sustaining children's attention. Regular and systematic observations are undertaken by the staff and this information is recorded on individual development profiles. This is not yet fully linked with activity plans, to ensure activities are closely tailored to meet children's individual needs and that learning experiences are maximised so that children make the best possible progress. Activity plans generally cover a broad and balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning, although at times are repetitive. Resources are made available to children, and areas of play are generally attractive for children, although the book corner and role play areas are not fully effective in engaging children's interests and development. Effective systems are in place for supporting children with additional requirements, this includes a designated and trained Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Individual Educational Plans are implemented and regular meeting with parents and other professionals take place.

Children's behaviour is generally good, as staff create an environment that values positive behaviour. Close, positive peer friendships are established, as children work together in activities and actively help one another. Staff establish positive relationships with the children, as they listen to children and value their contributions. The older children are confident talkers, as they use a range of vocabulary to express their thoughts and feelings, such as talking enthusiastically about playing football and birthday parties. The younger children are given appropriate support to help their emerging language as staff, spend time talking and listening to them. There are opportunities for children to develop an understanding of problem solving through daily activities, this includes measuring and staff using mathematical language. The outdoor environment provides an enjoyable play area for children where they can play with a range of toys at their own pace, for example, children enjoy spending time placing stones inside and

outside trucks and pushing the trucks around. Visitors are invited into the pre-school to talk about their role, such as the local fire safety officer and the local taxi driver, helping children learn about their local community. Festivals and traditional events are celebrated by the children and they have access to a suitable range of resources that reflect diversity.

Children thrive because conscientious attention is given to health and hygiene routines. Staff regularly remind children to wash their hands and wipe their nose when needed. Nappy changing routines ensure that cross-infection is minimised and children are generally comfortable. Children's snack time is successfully organised in promoting choice and independence, they have healthy snacks and access to fresh drinking water throughout the session, ensuring that they remain hydrated. Children know how to keep themselves safe as they move around the physical environment safely and use resources appropriately and staff consistently explain and remind children why they have to be safe. Consequently, children develop a good understanding of their own personal safety.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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